

Vernal Dune

Eugene Hoff

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VERNAL DUNE

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*IN WHICH IS SHOWN
THE END OF AN ERA*

BY
EUGENE HALL

NEW YORK
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1913

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This book is dedicated to the descendants of the following "gentlemen of ye ole schule" who were leaders in religious, social, and political circles of North Carolina in the first quarter of the nineteenth century; and who furnished characters and data for this story:

Colonel Theophilus Hunter, Raleigh, N. C.

Hon. William Hill, Raleigh, N. C.

Mr. Dyke Lindaman, Raleigh, N. C.

Mr. William Boylan, Raleigh, N. C.

Judge Duncan Cameron, Raleigh, N. C.

Mr. Robert Cannon, Raleigh, N. C.

Judge Romulus Saunders, Raleigh, N. C.

Governor Gabrel Holmes, Sampson County, N. C.

Colonel William Greene, Franklin County, N. C.

Dr. Simmons Baker, Chapel Hill, N. C.

Dr. Charles F. Deems, New York, N. Y.

Dr. John Edwards, Virginia.

“If an existing generation of men stand so woven together, not less indissolubly does generation with generation. Hast thou ever meditated on that word Tradition? How we inherit not life only, but all the garniture and form of life, and work and speak and even think and feel as our fathers and primeval grandfathers from the beginning have given it us.”

SARTOR RESARTUS.

“He commanded our fathers, that they should make *them* known to their children:

“That the generations to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare *them* to their children.”

PSALM 78:5, 6.

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PREFACE

I have neither the rugged lines of experience nor wisdom's silver threads to lead me far enough into the ever receding past to help me reproduce even a pencil sketch of "ye goode ole tyme," but bright young eyes catch the retrospective gleam from older eyes and eager ears listen to the echo from the hills and vales of "long ago."

There are various methods of preserving the history of a people — tradition, written history, coins, medals, monuments, laws, language, customs, costumes, and all these things can be defined with more minuteness in a narrative than in a concise history. An historical story not confined to crude facts can picture the progress of past events, with their effect upon social and political institutions with greater justice to a country and its people, and the youth of the present and future generations will form a clearer and more comprehensive knowledge of the life of their forefathers than can ever be learned from bare chronological records of the State, about which, as generations pass, tradition becomes too misty and mythical for clear transmission.

If the youth of the country are allowed to grow up with so meagre a knowledge of "ye ole tyme,"

and with such abundant sources of misinformation as are furnished by an ignorant and prejudiced foreign element, there is great danger that the coming generation will be led to believe that the pioneers of their State were barbarians whose chief occupation when not contending with savages was practicing cruelties, learned from their Indian associations, upon their slaves.

These events I have here written I learned through tradition, and from sources so authentic as to make them fixed facts.

I do not doubt there may have been in some sections less wealth, with the loss of advantages incident thereto, but a capital and its citizens should serve as a fair representation of a State. I consider it fortunate that my knowledge is centered there and that I am able to produce a picture of Southern life at that era. Not only a correct outline and natural coloring has been transmitted to me, but I have inherited the shadows and high lights of patriotism without which a Southern picture is a blurred misrepresentation.

Everything that concerns mankind enlists the human sympathies, and the affairs of one section of a country are interesting to the other sections, and especially is this the case when the sections are separated, not so much by distant boundary lines or national repulsion as by ignorance of the true and peculiar condition of a neighboring people.

Those who have honestly searched for the "light

of truth " will find it here, and a philosophy teaching by example.

We will give to our characters the true tone of mind and portray faithfully Southern life, as it was in the early part of the nineteenth century: local descriptions will be natural sketches, and every character painted from life, and every incident based on fact.

As far back as the sixth century Clothaire passed a law that no one should be condemned without being heard; and it is to be supposed that in this enlightened age that all who feel an interest in the South and those who are biased through ignorance will avail themselves of this opportunity to be informed.

There are perverse specialties resorted to by some writers, and apparently encouraged by their publishers. These specialties are skepticism, immorality, and a style of unjust criticism and questionable presentation of facts of one part of the country to pander to the prejudices of a more influential section.

It is not my intention to use any such advertising medium.

All who have read "Uncle Tom's Cabin"—that book of conjecture—should read this local history. It handles in an original and independent manner many questions of interest at that time, and which fanatics have used to fire the most deplorable holocaust of history.

LOUISBURG, N. C.



INTRODUCTION

The friends of North Carolina will find much of interest in each history bearing upon her early settlement, especially after sifting it of errors of ignorance, the outcome of limited records, errors of injustice, the misleading by reasoning from induction, and errors of prejudice, the natural growth of false representation.

As the general reader may not have time for so thorough an analysis, or the youthful student so patriotic a digestion of the unwholesome statements of some of the histories, it will not be amiss in the beginning to call attention to the historical base upon which we intend to rear our narrative.

It will be seen from the history of the colonies that part of the South now known as Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina was called the "Southern Colony."

"The long, broad rivers of the South, flowing lazily through a wide base plane of which furnished but little safe anchorage."¹

The northern coast (New England) became more thickly settled. The rapid growth that has since given that section a reputation for unprecedented thrift was not due to its having been settled by a superior peo-

¹ Thwaites' "The Colonies."

ple; rather, starting with greater numbers of colonists, a cold, bracing climate, and affected by its environment generally — these were circumstances conducive to prosperity and expansion. Then too, in the Southern colony the middle section known as North Carolina had a most dangerous seacoast, and was naturally to be avoided as a landing place for ships. “For a long period of years a prejudice existed against the middle region as a colonizing ground.”²

So it was the outcome of these circumstances that the Northern colony got the better start of the Southern section, and that the upper and lower sections of the Southern colony — which afforded safer harbors — were inhabited before the middle region; and quite natural that, having sixty years the start, the race for progression, local prosperity, and education was an unequal one. The sections colonized were increasing at a ratio of double interest before North Carolina even existed. The harbors above and below had brought in emigrants of varied characters. The historian says, “The colonists were for the most part a thriftless set, lacking the habit of industry . . . most of them were gentlemen, unused to and scorning manual toil.”³

John Smith, who was in control of the Southern colony, compelled his people to labor, saying, “He that will not work shall not eat.” He had repeatedly

² Thwaites’ “The Colonies.”

³ *Ibid.*

urged the patentees of the colony in London to "cease sending him gentlemen, idlers, and curious handicraftsmen, and instead of such to ship carpenters, husbandmen-gardeners, fishermen, blacksmiths, masons, and diggers up of trees' roots." ⁴

It is reasonable to suppose that Smith, who is described as being "more quick to magnify virtue in speech than illustrate it by deed," was not a pleasant ruler, and that some of these gentlemen placed themselves without the jurisdiction of Smith by seeking the tranquillity of the middle section, which they may have found an uphill business to boom, with only Roger Green and the poor dissenters who also had taken refuge within its borders. These English gentlemen who had sailed with the colonizing party, described as viewing the expedition in the light of a holiday excursion, naturally did not take interest in the work of planting a colony. They probably disliked the familiar associations of the ruder emigrants and the domineering authority of the leader. Having located they resisted all interference in their affairs, and it is not to be wondered that the dissenters resisted the law and religion that they had already tried to their sorrow.

Thwaites says that "Englishmen were soon found to be the best colonizers in the world. An intelligent race, large, well built and handsome, active in a high degree, fond of outdoor life and manly sports. They are brave and enterprising and will fight for su-

⁴ Thwaites' "The Colonies."

premacý, are tenacious of purpose, and carry with them in their migrations their ideas, their customs, and their laws. They do not assimilate with other races, in fact, there is inbred in them a strong dislike of foreigners, and still more of inferior races."

Bancroft describes North Carolina as being in many respects "the most singular community in America. Many of the residents had fled from injustice and persecution in other colonies, and in the solitude of the forests of North Carolina had become possessed of an independence which scorned any control but that of the government established by their consent. They had little use for laws, they were mainly a simple-hearted and virtuous race who by pursuing the paths of right gave no cause for restraint. . . . They were a God-fearing people . . . and anxious to live in the peaceful enjoyment of the good things God had given them, and to rear their children in the ways which they deemed conformable to His will. . . . Are there any who doubt man's capacity for self-government? Let them study the history of North Carolina. The inhabitants were restless and turbulent in their imperfect submission to a government imposed upon them from abroad. The administration of the colony was firm, humane, and tranquil when left to themselves. Any government but their own was oppressive."

The political needs of one section cannot be justly estimated by those of another. The people of New England and the southern colonies were too unlike

in their nature and habits to have been subjected to the same laws. A natural difference existed between these extreme settlements, independent of the colonists themselves. "In New England the narrowness of the Atlantic slope, the shortness of the rivers, the severe climate, the hostility of the savages, the neighborhood of the French, the density of the forests, and the fact that each community was an organized religious congregation . . . led to the establishment of more or less compact communities called towns." (Thwaites.)

This facilitated the spread of industry as well as necessitating a more vigilant watch over the morals of so mixed and crowded a community. "In the southern colonies the country was traversed by deep, broad river, highways leading far inland; the climate was genial, the savages proved comparatively friendly, and the introduction of slavery tended to foster an aristocratic class of landed proprietors. . . . The bulk of the people were isolated and township governments were impracticable; except for protection from Indians there was no necessity for massing the people. And on this account there seemed to have been less necessity in North Carolina, for early explorers had been charmed with the country, which they declared to be the "most plentiful, sweet, fruitful, and wholesome in the world," and well treated by the native people, "the most gentle, loving and faithful, void of all guile and treason, and

such as lived after the manner of the golden age." (Amidas and Barlow.)

"The bulk of the whites doubtless intended to treat the Indian honorably; but the forest traders were beyond the pale of law, and news of the details of their transactions seldom reached the coast settlements. As a neighbor, the Indian was difficult to deal with whether in the negotiations of treaties of amity or in the purchase of land. The struggle was inevitable — civilization against savagery. It was in the nature of things that the weaker must give way." (Thwaites.)

"It had been the boast of one of the earliest historians of North Carolina that this colony was the only instance of a nation planted in peace and located without bloodshed of the natives. This was true at this time. While Massachusetts, Virginia, and others were laying the foundation of their colony on the bones of the aborigines, and cementing their structures with blood, North Carolina was quietly pursuing her course unmolested by the Indians, and respecting their rights. The Indians viewed with jealousy the increasing numbers of the whites; the first blow was struck by them." (Thwaites.)

The Indian is as difficult a subject to discuss justly as he has been to deal with. What may have been the outcome of more patient and persistent friendliness and missionary work in his behalf, I know not. The subject is not a pleasant one to me, and I am

glad that era is too remote to have a place in my story.

Thwaites says, "The turbulent population of North Carolina paid little attention to religious matters through the seventeenth century." She certainly allowed no superstitious bigots as Cotton Mather and his fanatics to infest her borders; no witch-burning ever stained her records. Such missionary laborers were not wanted in the South, and history states that they were warned to "Depart the colony with all convenience." (Lawson.)

There was no community in which the people were happier or more contented than this one. When the cruelties of Berkeley drove many of the Virginians from their province they fled to North Carolina and were kindly received by the people, who treated Berkeley's demand to surrender the refugees for punishment with contempt." (Wheeler.)

The Carolinas, which had been planted sixty years later than Virginia, were in 1700 still weak, and it was a half century before they became important. In 1764 the people of North Carolina had become numerous, and attracted attention. I think when one views the history of North Carolina he can but wonder at her progress. It is like the youngest of a family giving an unprecedented example to its elders in the matter of practical sense, undaunted courage, public spirit, and executive ability. The youngest of the colonies, and yet the nursery of every noble

trait that has since made America's patriots and statesmen! Dare call her turbulent, because she resisted unjust laws? Dare call her indifferent to religion, when she was foster mother of the Protestant faith in America?

"The Colonial Assemblies were schools for the cultivation of the spirit of independence." (Thwaites.)

The colonists had formed within themselves, either by royal instruction, or royal charter assemblies so exceedingly resembling parliament in all their forms, functions and powers that it was impossible they should not imbibe some opinions of a similar authority. . . .

"The chief interest of the Carolinas in the development of America is the failure of proprietors to stem or deflect the tide of local government. Nowhere does the innate determination of the Anglo-Saxon to control his own political destiny more strikingly appear than in the contentions of the Carolinas with their English rulers. Never was the iniquitous policy of England toward her colonies more strikingly and perfectly illustrated than her treatment of North Carolina." (Wheeler.)

"The landed gentlemen, born aristocrats, were indolent, vain, haughty, arrogant and sensitive to restraint—a natural outgrowth of the social condition of the times; but they had great virtues as well as great faults . . . and when the crisis came a half-

century later they were foremost in the ranks and the councils of the Revolution." (Thwaites.)

In Virginia, at the beginning, all freemen were allowed to vote; but it was afterwards decided, in 1670, that the usual way of "chuseing burgesses by votes of all persons who having served their time as freemen of this country was detrimental to the colonies; and the principle was laid down that a voice in such elections should be given only to such as by their estates, real or personal, have interest enough to tye them to the endeavour of the public good."

"In the 18th century a freehold test obtained in most if not all of the colonies." (Thwaites.)

A later disregard of this judicious amendment has given Southern politicians a higher opinion of the political ability of their forefathers — illustrated by modern politicians in the easy import and export of hand baggage in their haste to have a "voyce" in the elections of other sections as their interests did "tye" them to the real or personal estates of other citizens, and the "endeavour" of their own private good.

In Thwaites' history of the colonies he uses the term "poor white trash" as though it was a distinctive and legitimate title for a disreputable class of people. He says the "poor white trash," which remains to-day a degrading influence, and "the presence of degraded laborers made all labor dishonora-

ble, and trade was held in contempt by the country gentlemen."

This is simply an error of ignorance as to local distinctions. The term "poor white trash" originated with the negro slaves, who, Thwaites correctly states, "in North Carolina were comfortably housed, clothed, and fed, and indulged in many amusements." Being happy in this servitude, they felt such great respect and pride in their masters' wealth and position, that they looked down upon the common people who had no slaves. This is no new sentiment, even if the master should not be held in veneration. We read in Proverbs, "He that is despised and hath a servant is better than he that honoreth himself and lacketh bread." And though the "gentlemen" did not engage in labor or trade, they did not scorn it, but patronized it in a most friendly and liberal way. The system was too convenient and agreeable to be frowned down. The tradespeople were characterized by thrift and contentment; the gentlemen by elegant leisure and refined culture.

"The upper class in dress, manners, and political thought resembled the English country gentlemen of their time. Here and there among them were men of fair scholarship, with degrees from Oxford and Cambridge. . . . They were of good, vigorous English stock, especially those who came after the Restoration, and in the struggle for independence two generations later furnished to the patriot cause a

high class of soldiers, diplomats, and statesmen.”
(Thwaites.)

Feeling that my historical base is sufficiently broad and long for the stage upon which our Southern friends are to appear, I will now raise the curtain and permit them to act and speak for themselves.

THE AUTHOR.

CHAPTER I

VERNAL-DUNE AND ITS MASTER

“A great plantation, with its galleried manor-house, its rows of negro quarters, and group of barns and shops, was in a large measure a self-sustaining community.”—THWAITES’ “COLONIES.”

AN imposing white mansion gleamed through the rich foliage of a beautiful grove, and was so elevated that from its windows the master could see vast plains of richest lowlands in cultivation and thousands of acres in most valuable woodland. So extensive was this estate, that the most distant ranges of forest growth took on a misty, smoky blue, finally becoming too ethereal to be located, except in the knowledge of those who knew just where a busy grist-mill wheel was picturesquely turned by an overflowing pond, or meadow lands and wheatfields awaited the harvesting. The ruthless hand of Time and “progress” has since wrought many changes, for the time of which we write was the first quarter of the last century.

An air of general comfort pervaded the entire premises. The foxhounds, resting from their morning’s sport, are sprawled in every kind of easy pos-

ture across footpaths and doorsteps, in piazza and doorway, when permitted to do so; but there exists mortal antipathy between maidservant and hounds, and they are, notwithstanding their friendly advances, kept just without the hospitable roof.

The cabins in and around the lot are double and comfortable looking, with neat, well-swept entrances, and in most instances a vine or thrifty, bright-colored flower invites special attention.

The sleek, round, good-natured faces of the little darkies show that they are well cared for. From the appearance of the colored adults there seems to be a great deal to do, a sufficient number to do it, and plenty of time to do it in. Close by is heard the methodical swaying intonation of the washwomen, whose long meter camp-meeting tune has no hurry in it, and in proportion to the length of the note is given a prolonged rub on the washboard or especial emphasis in the wringing.

So in the fields the undulating glitter of the hoes in their rise and fall is regulated by the song, and it sways from one part of the field to another, the minor strains of one party being caught and echoed with a zest that has a metallic ring in its melody.

There are a great many fields in cultivation, and a great many "hands" to work them, and there need be; a great many are to be fed and clothed, in which is no stint; there is evidently no speculation in Mars Theo, certainly an accumulation, but in some respects of doubtful advantage.

Everything adaptable to the climate and soil is grown on the plantation; luxuriant pastures are alive with hogs, beeves, sheep, while goats, chickens, ducks, geese, turkeys, and peafowls make the barnyard and lots lively, and the woods far and near abound in deer — a table delicacy that is no rarity. To the hunting of the deer is added that of the dainty partridge and the wily fox, and notwithstanding the adjacent creeks and ponds are adequate to fisherman's luck and picnic draughts, wagons in season bring up from the coast barrels of fish, and oysters, pickled and in the shell, to be deposited in the spacious cellar.

We have in these features a fair indication of the solidity of the material welfare of Vernal-Dune. Now pass through a beautiful flower garden into a high-pitched double porch supported by large white pillars, and thence into a broad hall: heavy high-backed chairs set grandly against a paneled wainscoting, a mahogany table so highly polished that the hats hanging above it are reflected therein, meet the eye. A mammoth clock rises from out a distant corner, and it would seem that its stentorian voice, echoing through the hall, would make one more solemnly cognizant of the flight of time. But Mars Theo's family did not view this lifelike machine with the awe of a later generation, for strike it ever so loud or clear, they rise and retire at their own sweet will. The children climb upon the high chairs to better investigate the receding sea-storm, emblematic

of dark nights, and the advent of the rosy smiling physiognomy of the full moon.

The descendants of these children in after years, when on a visit to Grandpa, would look askance at the queer old thing as they tip-toed by, and if it happened to strike they quickened their pace as though expecting it to follow with heavy strides.

The floors are waxed and polished, the parlor to such a degree that the furniture is reflected as in a stream of a well-shaded nook; all of the furniture is the best in use at this time, the piano being among the first brought to the State, and though the legs are small, it has a sufficient number supporting it to bear any amount of musical pressure. The harp should have been one of a thousand strings — it had cost that many dollars. The mantelpiece is adorned with handsome silver candelabra. The portrait of a fine-looking old gentleman holding a pretty rosy-cheeked, bright-eyed child on his knees, is new, and its lifelike expression and natural coloring throw quite in the shade the dark silhouettes on either side. Large mirrors framed in gilt molding of unique workmanship hang between the two windows, opposite each other; on the table are a number of books, not arranged for ornament, but for the convenience and entertainment of any idle occupant of the room. Each volume is bound quite plain, in leather; the titles of some of them are, "The Invisible Gentleman," "Fool of Quality," "Sir Charles Grandison," "Sir Roland Ashton," and "Lady of the

Manor." Stepping into an adjoining room we find in a commodious mahogany book-case a long row of Addison's *Spectator*, Cyclopædia Britannica, commentaries, biographies, Montgomery's "Creation," — in fact, a liberal collection of good books.

There are also several very creditable bouquets in water colors, and a piece of tapestry, the antiquity of which may have been the Arras trade-mark, and sufficiently unintelligible to the uncultivated eye to bespeak for it some rank as a work of art. Perhaps some æsthetic ancestor brought it from his fatherland to be fostered with care in this "new country," and speak of a distant line of ancestors, and their advantages. If its faded, moth-eaten threads were delicately handled by an interested genealogist it would unravel in a long line, and lead him into the presence of virtuosi whose patrons or compeers were necessarily among people of wealth and culture.

If you would comprehend the breadth and extent of the hospitality of a Southern gentleman of the "old school," look into the dining-room, see the long table, the unique buffet, with its array of fine china on its shelves, translucent ware, barely tinted with green, a carnation pink and bud, a cream honey-suckle and blue forget-me-not, tied with a crimson bow, above which two delicately tinted butterflies hover, makes as dainty pattern as ever delighted æsthetic housewife. Beneath the shelves two brass knobs at either end form the key to a secret board which is drawn out every day to hold the dessert.

And beneath are double doors, which give only a faint idea of the capacity they serve to conceal. The sideboard, notwithstanding that it has a leg at every corner — and owing to its quaint style of manufacture it has a good number of corners — is, figuratively speaking, groaning beneath its “weight of good cheer.”

The bed chambers are spacious and airy, sometimes six windows in a room, a pure southern breeze swaying the light fringe of the dimity curtains. The high tester bedstead, the massive bureau with its formidable claw feet, mahogany tables, stands, and chiffoniers, bright woolen rugs placed here and there, give an air of solid comfort and elegance, indicating the mental and the pecuniary status of its inmates.

The late Colonel Chasseur, Sr., when a young man, had taken an active part in politics, having served in the provincial congress, his zeal, patriotism, and popularity had also placed him in command of a regiment. His son Theophilus had married into an influential family of Franklin County noted for “the courtliness of its sons and the beauty of its daughters.” He had inherited a large estate, which, with his wife’s dowry, necessitated so much of his attention, that, with the social feature of a man in his position, there was left little time or inclination for the onerous duties of political life, and had impelled him to refuse the nomination for the Governorship of his State. He was still interested in politics,

where a man of means and sound judgment can generously advance more ambitious and more needy aspirants for political honors. He was an indulgent husband and father, a kind master, a true friend, and a generous neighbor. He was a Mason of high degree, and had recently donated a city lot to that fraternity.

His family consisted of wife and seven children. Mary, the oldest daughter, had married Captain Douglass, a gentleman of means, position, and great popularity. They resided in Raleigh, and Mary's sweet charm of manner drew nearer the ties of friendship that had gathered about her happy girlhood. She was an elegant matron, the mother of four sprightly children. Theo, the first, namesake and pride of his grandfather; Tom, a big blue-eyed, fair-haired cherub; Willie, the cute little auburn-haired wag of the family, and the little Virginia made a most interesting group of grandchildren.

William, his only son, was of patrician face, beautiful in its refinement, and physique grand in its manliness.

Sarah, the third child, was a handsome brunette, her rich olive complexion smooth, clear, and tinted with so warm a glow that the soft black eyes are particularly notable.

Ada, fairer, with dark blue eyes and brown hair, a most symmetrical figure, was very beautiful and sprightly.

Jannette, still more delicate in form and coloring,

with the beauty and grace of her mother, was both gentle and winning.

Louise was like her father and, though only ten years old, showed decidedly beautiful and strong traits of character, such as generosity, charity and unselfishness. Kindness of heart, sincerity, frankness, and sweet affection had already stamped the child's character with so gracious an individuality that during her life she drew to her the hearts of all classes and color. She was as active as a fawn, light and airy in her movements as a fairy, and the most graceful dancer in her school. There was nothing negative in her character or beauty. She had dark brown hair and eyes, with well penciled brows, and a complexion and expression pronounced in its brightness.

Eugenia, the youngest and the household pet, had large beautiful brown eyes, and though the frailest and most delicate of the children, was possessed with a spirit of life and mischief. She and Louise, with the assistance of the grandchildren, kept things lively and enjoyed themselves with a zest that was rejuvenating to the older members of the family. Relatives and friends always found it agreeable to visit this noted country seat, and it was no unusual event to see large family carriages arrive, with man-servant and maid, assured of a welcome at Vernal-Dune. There was room enough in the stables for the horses, room enough in the cabins, and room enough in the "great house." And every luxury in its season pours

from the Vernal-Dune's "horn of plenty" in a continual stream. This hospitable country seat was situated scarce a mile and half from the capital city, and provided every style of vehicle, from a large family carriage to a "stick gig."

Gentlemen of leisure were fond of lounging in its cool piazzas in summer or around the cheerful fire in winter, in intelligent conversation, or music. If predisposed to games, one or more of the family were unusually clever at chess and backgammon, the whist table being also convenient.

Whenever the huntsman's horn sounded in the early morning, every hound that caught its familiar reverberation dashed forth with zest as unabated at the last chase as at the beginning of the season. Nor were the huntsmen themselves less keen to the magic of that sound, and soon hurrying feet and clatter of hoofs added to the morning noises, and the sport was on.

The sporting gentlemen in Raleigh and the adjacent country seats considered the rest at Vernal-Dune not the least part of the pleasures of the season.

CHAPTER II

ARISTOCRATS AND PLEBEIANS

IN one of the large rooms on the second floor of Chasseur mansion several young ladies were taking their usual siesta, two reclining in reversed order on the high bed so as to be in agreeable positions for conversation, another on a lounge under the window, too deeply absorbed in reading to notice the others' monotonous tones, while a fourth was putting up her abundant tresses at a quaint dressing table. Attracted by the clatter of galloping horses, she looked through the window blinds saying, "Jannette, here comes Cousin Henry and old General Edney."

"Which Henry?" asked Jannette without looking from her book.

"Both," laughed Ada, "for Henry Semloh and Old Peter Brown have just come in sight."

"Well, Sister Ada, you go down. Sis Sally is in the parlor—I hear the harp. We will come down presently."

"Well, don't wait to finish that book, please, and you girls get up and dress." In passing she pulled the pillow from under the nearest unsuspecting head and, throwing it at the girls, ran off laughing.

When the horsemen had reached the gate as many little negroes as there were horses had presented themselves promptly to take charge of them, and another with a handspring or two had reached the gate head up, in time to swing it open. The four gentlemen entered the porch where Colonel Chasseur sat bidding them welcome with the cordial complacency of a man whose genial habits, and frequency of like hospitality rendered any formality useless and unexpected.

"Welcome, gentlemen, welcome. I have been watching the road for the last half hour. What is the latest from the election?"

"That is why we hurried out," said Henry Shotwell.

"Hear him!" said Peter Brown. "By Granny! it must be an overwhelming majority indeed, that takes seven days in the week and fifty-two weeks in the year to bring it all out." There was a general laugh.

"Father has come out by a large majority," said Semloh proudly.

"Good, good!" exclaimed the Colonel. "I thought he would. He will make a fine Governor. We need just such a man at this time. Sarah dear, your Uncle Gabriel is elected."

"I am certainly glad," said Sarah, coming forward and speaking to the gentlemen who had risen to greet her. "I must proclaim the glad tidings. Cousin Julia is anxious to hear."

Soon the gratifying news was discussed in the various rooms. Little Louise and Mary Shotwell caught the gay infection of pleasant news and danced about in great glee.

"Of course, Julia, you will all move to Raleigh," said Sarah.

"Yes, and it will certainly be nice living so near dear old Vernal-Dune; yet the move will not be without regret."

"You are thinking of some handsome swain you will leave behind," replied Sarah.

"Oh, pray don't leave him behind!" said Ada. "While Uncle Gabriel is doing a — a — national reform you and Aunt Mary must turn your attention to the social. We want a few younger and handsomer men for these times and these ladies. I say, Mr. Chairman, we need more."

Jannette dropped her book and, rising to a sitting posture, interrupted the merry speaker:

"I say, Mr. Speaker, I am aroused from my lethargy."

"That means lounge," whispered Mary, nudging Louise.

"And," continued Jannette, "I am not going to have my territory invaded. The gentleman familiarly known as Old Peter Brown and his fortune have long since been registered as mine in this circle, so I insist that when the member from Sampson moves that arrangements be made for the transportation of her own admirers."

Here a little darky interrupted them by putting her head in the door.

"Mars Henry Shot-ell say if yer don't come down he'll ha' to fetch yer, caze of yer laffin'."

"Can't I learn you no manners?" said Mam Violet, surprising the dusky little messenger by approaching from the rear and burying her hand in Esther's woolly head. With amusing dexterity their relative positions were changed.

"How often I tell you to knock at white folkses' door?" giving her an extra shake by way of emphasis, as she released her. "Now see if yer got sense nuff to fetch a pail of water fer the back passage, and fill the pitchers, you and Sally and Margaret."

Having delivered herself of these directions with fierce dignity, Mam Violet entered the room with an armful of clean towels. She directed the movements of two small girls who were sent about on various errands during the toilets of the young ladies.

Mam Violet was rather stout, and she never stood up longer than she was cuffing the ears of some of her own race of fewer years and less experience. Now she sat, with a smile of perfect contentment on her round face, her generous arms encircling Louise, who had not outgrown the habit of sitting in Mam Violet's lap or of still being the object of an unparalleled affection and admiration of her old nurse.

"Come 'long, honey, I dun got your clothes and

water all ready, for 'mammy's chile,' don't never keep nobody waiting."

It was not long before a bevy of bright girls in fresh and becoming costumes joined the gentlemen in the parlor. The evening was spent in so agreeable a manner the guest did not leave until after tea, and although the meetings are frequent, the hour of parting comes too soon, for the princely hospitality of Vernal-Dune is unquestioned.

Henry Shotwell and Henry Semloh were nephews of Colonel Chasseur. The former lives in Raleigh. Mary and Martha, his sisters, were fond of their uncle's family and spent much of their time with them.

Henry Semloh was visiting Vernal-Dune with his sister Julia, and Theo Chasseur Semloh, the Colonel's oldest namesake, was a popular young cadet of West Point. His noble physique and fine military bearing might have foretold his patriotic enthusiasm for the Southern cause and high rank in the Civil War. General Edney is a Revolutionary soldier, tall and straight. *A la militaire* distinguishes every line of his homely face and every move of his spare figure.

Peter Brown is a wealthy Scotchman, a well-made man, who still adhered to his "knickerbockers" and black silk hose. He always wore a pure white flannel suit in summer and heavy gray flannel in winter. Many of the gentlemen had adopted long pantaloons, but all wore linen, very elaborate in fluted ruffles of most delicate texture.

It was an era and a people whose time was not money, and they were not equipped to run a race with the needy sons of men for the almighty dollar. They had as much as they wanted, and enjoyed it right royally. They dressed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day.

The line between the classes was more rigidly drawn in this era than in later generations, not so much owing to the pride of our ancestors as to other causes. Those who had inherited valuable estates and had been reared in affluence spent most of their time in pleasure seeking, or followed such professions as were agreeable to them; it was no break-neck speed for accumulation — not at all parallel to what was known in after years as the “strife of life.” The intellect of Southern aristocracy found many agreeable fields of operation in which they might make choice of pursuits, not one that was to master them body and soul, but a pleasant hobby that was often ridden so judiciously that it added strength and brilliancy to ancestral honors and inheritance, besides stamping the man with a noble individuality.

The artisans, mechanics, and day laborers were in many instances worthy men, having been raised, from necessity, in habits of industry, with a creditable ambition to improve their lot. They had neither time nor inclination for familiar association with gentlemen of leisure. Between them there were minor differences, but none the less intuitively recognized by both classes. The sweat and dust of the

laborer in his uncouth habiliments suited to his occupation was in sharp contrast to the elegant apparel of a gentleman, often distinctive in quality, quantity, and coloring. Those who had been poor and uncultivated for generations had no congenial taste with those of greater advantages; but the kindest feeling existed between these classes. The moneyed men were princely in their generosity, and paid liberally for all services rendered them, besides lifting the yoke of poverty when it pressed sorely on a fellow-creature's neck.

In the beginning of the nineteenth century the chivalrous Southern gentleman would have flushed with hot indignation had it been intimated that a lady of the family should go out to any kind of service. To be a devoted wife, a tender mother, gentle daughter, loving sister, sympathetic friend, generous neighbor, and kind mistress was all that was expected of lovely woman at home; in society a model of refined and elegant grace to give healthy tone and dignity to an atmosphere in which the embryo Southern woman was to be nourished. Even among the poorest classes it was thought to be sufficient work for a woman to look after the interest and comfort of her husband and children. It was considered the natural position of a woman to minister to the needs of the family with such help as she could get.

CHAPTER III

VERNAL-DUNE AT SUNRISE

"The chambers of the sun explored,
Where tints of thousand hues are stored."

THE sun had just peeped above the horizon line, and its luminous glance was flashed back from glitter of dew-spangled leaf and bloom, and Vernal-Dune was scintillating in the glory of a spring sunrise. Fleecy clouds, rose tinted, grow brighter and brighter as they near the sun, while piling high as a nebulous tiara of ruby and gold they crown the day god, and his genial warmth touches all nature into new life and beauty.

The blast from the overseer's horn set in motion the machinery of Vernal-Dune, from the great humming mill down to the gardener's wheelbarrow; even good Miss Barbara opened the dairy door and put in motion half dozen churns, at each of which a trim boy or girl in a long white apron manipulates the dasher, but with no great regularity, for when Aunt Judy came near the dasher went up and down with incessant "slish slosh! butter come! butter come!" As Aunt Judy turned away the lazy slosh-up-and-down, that occasionally her ear had caught,

was not owing to the distance between them or to any acoustic defect in the atmosphere.

Now each manipulator, regardless of Aunt Judy, came to a dead halt as the clatter of hoofs was heard. A couple of horsemen galloped in sight and, stopping at the gate, a prolonged blast struck the air, its shrill musical notes echoing far over the hills.

A young darkey shot out from a distant stable mounted on a fine bay, and bending over the horse in true jockey style comes "t'aring to the gret hus."

Mars William came forth equipped for the chase, and from the four corners of the plantation a pack of hounds was soon gathered amid the clamor of their deep and peculiarly mournful baying. Greetings were exchanged by the gentlemen.

"Where is Semloh?"

"Why, I couldn't get him out of the bed, and you are late."

"Yes, Brown here was as hard to raise as the dead."

"There comes Boyden and General Daniel now!"

"Hello! Just in time."

"Dick, is Lafayette all right?"

"Yes, sir; I'se been up long fore day currying with one hand and listening wid tuther."

"I saw you come out of the cabin ten minutes ago trying to stretch out of your shirt," said his master, only half repressing a smile as he mounted.

"You no kane to be oneasy, Mars William," said

an elderly negro coming up, "I allers tends 'Fayette myself, fust thing."

As the sportsmen rode off, Uncle Tom observed, "You no casion to lie to Mars William. He whack down on you ev'ry time like a hawk on a chicken's back, and fust thing you know de debil gwine to whack down on you too."

"See dese legs, Uncle Tom? When de debil comes arter me I'se jest gwine ter fly like Mars William on 'Fayette," and he struck out in imitation of 'Fayette both as to sound and speed, vaulting over the fence without touching it.

When Dick was next seen he was leaving the dairy door with a quart tin of milk in one hand and a pone of bread and meat in the other. Sitting down on the grass within speaking distance of the churning brigade, he called out in a tone of humor peculiar to his race, "See dare, one uv you lazy brack niggers come shoo de flies offen me whilst I eats me butter-milk. Yhar! yhar!" affecting a boisterous laugh.

"Bound fer yer big mouth," said Aunt Judy. "Don't you hear yer daddy calling you? He say fetch de wheelbarrow long."

"I ain't neder," said Dick, sotto voce, then louder, "Mammy, Mars William say fer me ter lissen out, and if de hounds scent a deer fer me to come a-t'ar-ing." And without further argument he shoved his cup in the cabin window and soon he and "ole Bet" were in joyful pursuit of the hounds.

Dick was one of those irrepressible, ubiquitous little imps that never failed to be in at the death or climax to any event. There was no hole in or above ground he could not burrow, and no tree however tall or bare of limbs that could get the slip on Dick; no horse, mule or colt that Dick could not catch and ride; no cow, however young and wild, that Dick could not milk. Dick could run faster, jump higher, dance funnier, sing louder, and work less than anyone on the plantation. But he was so good-natured and so useful in many ways that he was subject to no law. "Dick'll ha' ter ketch dat chicken"; "Dick'll ha' ter go fer the doctor"; "Dick'll ha' ter git de pig outten de field"; "Dick'll find de stray cow." There was not anything requiring speed, cunning, activity, ingenuity, smacked of recreation or dissipation, but Dick slipped into it by common consent and to his own satisfaction. His idea of religion was as unorthodox as that of a Hindoo, and he was told daily by some old patriarch of the plantation "dat the devil would show git yo' les yo' mended yo' ways," and it was his simple faith in his legs that ever induced Dick on a dark night to go from the "great house" to his mammy's cabin. Whatever he preferred doing was done Dick's way and in Dick's own time, and his watchword never failed to act like magic, "Mars William tole me," for Dick was a constitutional liar.

CHAPTER IV

THE HONOR AND DIGNITY OF THE OFFICE OF GOVERNOR — THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY — MAIL SYSTEM — PRINTING PRESS — GOVERNMENT OF NORTH CAROLINA — EDUCATION IN NORTH CAROLINA — THE RELIGION OF OUR ANCESTORS — A HAPPY MEDIUM BETWEEN SUPERSTITION AND ASCETICISM — THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

“The inauguration of Governor was a brilliant social event.”
—THWAITES’ “COLONIES.”

THE newly elected Governor Semloh was duly installed in office. He had been actively engaged in politics for years, having served in the General Assembly ten years, nine of which were spent in the senate. This showed his fitness for State ministration and his popularity with the people. He was a fair representative of a true Southern gentleman, and his removal to Raleigh was an acquisition to that place from a social standpoint as well as political. Governor Semloh was so much given to hospitality that the State salary was inadequate to meet the expenses, but that gave him little concern, for his income from his estate in Sampson County was added to his salary and with princely liberality expended

upon select friends, political constituents, and the public generally.

Owing to the fact that moneyed men had better educational advantages, and that mental qualifications were considered requisite for office of honor and trust, only men from this class were nominated for responsible offices. In fact, certain votes were confined to freeholders, as seen in the Introduction to this work.

At this era the Southern people thought little of accumulation, and to be a State officer and to sustain the dignity of the office was no moneymaking business. The royal hospitality of our ancestors meant the expenditure of an income within itself a fortune. Of course the "palace" took a very active part in dispensing its good cheer. The cordial handshake of the popular statesman, the kind greeting of his Excellency's lady, with a glimpse of his charming daughters, was sufficient inducement to draw the curious masses to every public reception; while the entertainment between friends was daily an open door affair. Wherever a party happened to gather, be the occasion what it may, there the inner man was ministered unto.

The General Assembly was then something more than a corral of donkeys or a puppet convention, the pulling of wires delegated to a few tricky politicians. There was honor in representing a section; a member was nominated according to his meeting with the requirements of the office, and not for being an un-

scrupulous demagogue; nor by acclamation, because he alone would agree to run for the place, it would be well if such nominees were compelled to run an interminable race with their backs to the Capital, some Assemblies I wot of would have acquired a notoriety on the order of the "Scattered Nation." However, all honor to those worthy men, who for the safety of our state and the good of the people, have from time to time since the war allowed themselves to be penned in such company, and if their lusty kicking has not cleared the field, it has extended the area of their own jurisdiction.

At the close of the Assembly one of the most brilliant events of the season was the legislators' ball. Attendance was by invitation, and the best music obtainable was furnished, to feature the session's termination. The large dining-room of the hotel was converted into a dancing hall, and the floor waxed as thoroughly as skill and patience could accomplish. Here the stately minuet was congeed through, to the delectable satisfaction of the beaux and belles of 1821.

Although there were post offices in those days, letters were not so common as now, and postage stamps were not yet in use. A person wishing to engage in epistolary communications sent a letter, for which favor the recipient paid twenty-five cents. The letters were ingeniously folded and fastened by a piece of wax, pressed by a seal which was usually ornamented with some armorial device of foreign ances-

tors. Social missives were more daintily closed by the use of a pretty colored wafer, the selection of which might sometimes be a key to the contents of the note, through the interpretation of color. The seals frequently bore tiny mottoes, "Multum in parvo," conveying a heart full of sentiment.

The time had passed when Colonial Governors or titled proprietors could prohibit the printing press, or return thanks to heaven that there was not a printing press in the Southern provinces. There were newspapers enough in Raleigh at this time to assist in pushing all spirited enterprises. The press is a herald that should lead every brigade of pioneers, for it blazes the way of progress as effectually as does the yeoman's axe. The press is a power. It has the ear of the people; it turns the windmill of public opinion with a breath and sways the masses with the flourish of a pen. However, it was not till after the close of the war in 1812 that our people fully appreciated the adage, "The pen is mightier than the sword." Since then a great increase of newspapers and enterprise has marked the progress of the country.

Statistics of this period, when taken as a whole, show badly for schools, but it must not be forgotten that when the other colonies had schools a half century old North Carolina was not even colonized! But the University was established in obedience to the *first* Constitution of the State. There was, at the time of which we write, another reason

for the indifferent showing of statistics of education. In North Carolina were two distinct classes of society. The wealthy freeholders were aristocrats, the other class plebeians. Good schools and well-paid teachers were provided for the young scions of aristocracy, for it was but natural that those who drank at the fountain of knowledge should see that their little flocks did not thirst, yet, on the other hand it was equally natural that the others — where ignorance was bliss — made no effort to be wise. So it happened, that while many were well educated and accomplished, more were unlearned. This was not due to any disposition on the part of the upper class to keep the poorer class down,— for they were uniformly liberal in the dispensation of material assistance and kind in their manner,— but different social conditions had in the beginning of the colony divided the classes, so each contentedly walked wherein their lines had fallen. There was no legal barrier to the acquisition of an education by the plebeian youth, and often a sprightly boy or girl was materially assisted to that end by the aristocracy. However, the majority of working people were not sufficiently ambitious to “bother” themselves about advantages they knew nothing of.

The North made greater progress in education, that is, education was more generally diffused. Here there were no distinct lines of caste. The people were all white, all descendants of pretty much the same stock, and with about equal advantages. From

the outset it was a struggle among themselves, an inherent struggle for supremacy, and upon the principle of the "survival of the fittest," the fittest naturally forged to the front. The outcome of this rivalry of members of the same race one against another was the cause of intelligence and thrift for which that section became notable. This general business warfare increased their wealth, their industries, and their educational facilities.

Freeing and educating the negro had yet no part in the white man's scheme of life. Experience with the negro had shown that he could better advance the interests of the whites in southern fields, being adapted by nature to warm climate. His transfer to the South was therefore but the adjustment of a natural law. The Southern aristocrats, in regard to the common people and their work, believed that the workers fulfilled God's design in labor, and saw that they were well paid, happy, and contented. Each class advanced the interest of the other, yet nevertheless was circumscribed by social traditions. This to a degree accounts for North Carolina's being behind the other States in the statistics of education, her government of aristocracy being, in the liberal arts, self-centered. This is a fair solution of the subject, and given by way of explanation, rather than extenuation, though if the reader will adjust himself to an atmosphere of the first quarter of the nineteenth century, he will see that much may be allowed in the matter of extenuation.

It is not to be expected that the religious fervor of New England Puritans had taken any deep hold on the people of this section; the enlightened, luxurious lovers of that day were doing quite a natural and not unwise thing when they chose the happy medium between the superstition of the Dark Ages and the asceticism of the Puritans. They thought that if God allowed the old patriarchs the privilege of their lands and their herds, their man-servants and maid-servants, they followed a safe example and walked uprightly so long as they had due reverence for God and just consideration for their fellow-men. The passage of Scripture, "He that delicately bringeth up his servant from a child shall have him become his son at the length," may have been conscientiously construed into a divine admonition to be careful to draw a line between the son and the servant.

I think with great veneration and pride of our honorable ancestors as God-fearing and God-serving men, the Ten Commandments as square and compass with which to build a high tower of Christian character, with fewer tools of enlightenment, they cut and hewed their way to the Eternal City — blazing the way so plainly that we may follow, and upon our Spiritual inheritance build with more exactness of plan and of perhaps more beautiful and perfect architectural finish.

At this time the Presbyterian Church was the principal place of worship. Built of brick, it even now occupies the same site. It was then furnished with a

high-boxed pulpit. The pews, inclosed with high paneling, had doors opening in the aisle, while a seat ran around the other three sides, making it necessary for half of the congregation to sit with their backs to the preacher. It was not a one-sided study of fantastic millinery only, by the vain and thoughtless of the congregation, but a study of physiognomy as well. Quite a unique arrangement it was, the children of the family on the front seat immediately under the parental eye, but it was especially convenient for the small boy, who might without inconvenience to himself or the interference of *paterfamilias* stare at the choir to his heart's content, while General Daniel manipulated the bow of the great bass violin.

It was at this church that Governor Semloh, Colonel Chasseur, and his neighbor Boyden worshiped, each paying six hundred dollars for the use of a pew. Others probably did the same, though most of the pews were free.

CHAPTER V

THE GOVERNOR'S PALACE — A LEVEE

OUR progenitors were inspired with the happy thought of building a "palace" for the residence of the Governor. So according to their means and ways of architecture a mansion was erected. Compared with the palaces of this day and generation, such a dignified appellation may appear a misnomer, but remember it has been dismantled by the ravages of time and war. Having been public property, no ivy of sentiment drapes its angular form; it emits no halo of glory, as other battle-scarred veterans; it is more like an old army horse, divested of its rich caparison, discharged from distinguished service. However, at that time, without being unique in style or much ornamented, its associations had dignified it. It was large and solid, built of brick and stuccoed in imitation of granite, with a liberality of dimensions that really lifted it above the common order of houses, and when fitted out with new and handsome furniture it was no inferior abode. Brilliantly lighted and its ponderous doors thrown open for a "levee," its pompous title suggested no smile. Let us enter with a party of guests. The large parlors are thrown into

one grand salon by sliding back the great doors. The windows are draped in heavy crimson and black brocade, bordered with rich gimp and fringe hung in graceful abundance, the shimmering luster of its folds brought out in full play by the many lights of the chandeliers, while hundreds of pendant prisms catch and reflect in rainbow scintillations the rich coloring from cornice to floor.

There is no affectation of style, no effort to impress the assembly with the pomp and ceremony of an event, but a natural elegance of demeanor that bespoke for the participants as having been to the manner born, and with such associations that the normal temperature of self-respect was neither raised nor lowered by putting on or taking off political honors.

After the ceremony of receiving, the company gathered themselves into congenial parties. Old politicians repaired to a room where they smoked and discussed the leading questions of the day, while others in a remote recess took a hand at cards. A large room was provided for the dancers. In those days young people were expected to be young people, and dancing was in vogue everywhere and by most everybody. The good dames who cared not to dance looked on approvingly while their graceful charges "tripped the light fantastic toe," and not with any compunction of conscience. It was considered merely the effervescence of youthful spirits.

Sarah Chasseur and her partner, having finished

their dance, returned to the salon, where a party of distinguished guests had just entered. This beautiful girl was a happy medium between the practical and sentimental; not one of her score of admirers had made any impression upon her heart, neither was she coldly indifferent to Cupid's wiles, but standing at the threshold of beautiful womanhood, happily expectant, without any excited interest or impatience for a step in advance. Her escort walked off reluctantly, as Henry Shotwell joined her. "Cousin Sarah," he said slyly, "what misnomers names often are. I declare Mr. Brown is decidedly blue."

"Yes," laughed Sarah, "and here comes Mr. Strong, who everybody knows is quite weak."

While Henry was laughing, Miss Jane Semloh approached them, accompanied by Mr. Strong.

"Miss Sarah," said that gentleman, "I heard Brown slandering you just now."

"You brained him on the spot," exclaimed Henry, with mock ferocity.

"How could he?" asked Jane, laughing archly, "with nothing to operate with or upon?" feeling sure the obtuse gentleman at her side would scarcely catch her meaning.

"That is so," he innocently replied; "I was not prepared for action."

At this Henry's merriment knew no bounds.

"What was the slander, Mr. Strong?" asked Sarah.

"He said you were so proud and hard to please

that there was not a man in the house you would marry."

"I am sure," answered Sarah, smiling, "I cannot speak as positively as that on the subject myself — I have not seen them all. With many I have no acquaintance. Mr. Brown would have spoken more accurately had he said there was *one man* in the house I would not marry."

"So you really kicked him, Cousin Sarah? That accounts for his being so blue."

"Then," said General Edney, who had joined the group in time to get the drift of the fun, "now is a good time to look around and make a selection. Don't you think it possible that one of the assembly might not sue in vain?" placing his thumbs under his arms, and spreading his large hands across his breast, suggestive of great complacency. The extreme homeliness and ludicrous air of the old General caused his remarks to be received with great merriment.

But the thought thus presented to Sarah made her involuntarily cast her bright eyes over the ever-changing crowd, and they rested upon a handsome, finely proportioned stranger, so manly in bearing that he would have attracted attention in any assembly. At the same time he turned as if attracted by their gayety. The poise of the well-shaped head crowned with glossy waves of auburn hair, the magnetic glance, was not without effect.

The beautiful glow on Sarah's cheek deepened,

her eyes fell from the stranger to the tall gaunt figure of the old General and she said with a feeling of sincerity, singularly sweet, "Possibly there *is one* who will not sue in vain."

This impression took somewhat the form of a presentiment, when a sprightly young doctor who was much in love with Ada came up to ask her permission to introduce a friend.

Miss Martha Shotwell, who had been the doctor's partner, said, as he returned for the stranger, "Sarah, he is a most distinguished lawyer from P——, a Mr. McKinnon. Here he comes."

Again Sarah's eyes met those of the handsome stranger, as she gracefully acknowledged the introduction.

This acquaintance began with a shadow of presentiment that fatalists so delight in following. It may take no definite form, no well-defined posture; it may sometimes be quite in the background only dimly remembered, or it may press closely with strange pertinacity; it may be lost sight of for a time by the relative adjustment of light and object, but at some unexpected turn it peeps over the shoulder or passes to the front as a reminder that if you are not a prisoner, you are under surveillance. Now if the pursued are reputed not superstitious, they will walk as perpendicularly as possible, recognizing it only by an air of "Get thee behind me, Satan"; but if the presentiment is agreeable, we are apt to play with it as a happy child who is under no physical or mental

restraint. We will keep pace with its shadow or make playful effort to be rid of it, perhaps call a positive halt, and then race off only for the gratification of being followed. Sometimes the race is given up in happy abandonment, and the sweetest flowers along life's pathway are gathered in its shadow. What Sarah's presentiment will prove to be remains to be seen. Mr. McKinnon will have frequent opportunities to personate the shadow. He is a prominent lawyer, attends the Wake Courts, and will spend much time in the "City of Oaks," with an eye to the close proximity of Vernal-Dune. He may prove an unwelcome attendant or indifferent guard of a maiden's heart, or interesting the girl, be led a happy captive, sweetly and innocently coquetted with along the way until courtship's race is run, and the two are happy companions through life.

CHAPTER VI

THE STATE HOUSE — MAY QUEEN

“And when the crisis came a half century later, they were of the foremost in ranks and the councils of the Revolution.”
— THWAITES.

THE “State House” is of wood, the “Capitol Square” inclosed by a neat wooden fence. The building is large, and the rotunda gives it an imposing height, that seemed better to fit it as a site for the magnificent statue of Washington, chiseled from pure white marble, by Carnova, a gifted son of Rome.

It was here the schoolgirls from the Academy would stop and, joining hands, form a circle around the statue and with enthusiasm sing “Hail Columbia.” Ah, who dare say that the inherent love of country is not fostered by its monuments and patriotic songs. The youngest one in the party never forgot those patriotic marches around the grand monument, and years after that capitol building had been reduced to ashes, and the great image only a pile of broken stones, like the vaulted bones of the great patriot, this incident was told to a later generation, and listened to with much interest. A worthy ambition was kindled, an impatience to grow up and emulate

an honored hero's example and be worthy of such soul-stirring demonstrations; or, as the sex might be, to add interest and devotion to every great national cause by a beautiful enthusiasm more potent than physical strength. If all the unwritten history of our State could be gathered into an historical scroll, and unfurled before the gaze of an inquiring world, it would be an escutcheon of such purity and strength that even the opprobrium of later years, resulting from national interference,—the dirty black seal of political equality, half-breeds, and low-bred demagogues,—would be forgotten, nay, its black record would be as night, effaced by the full glare of a noonday's sun! and the keynote to heroic deeds that have since thrilled the heart chords of nations. There would be found the germ of strength that when called into action seemed abnormal in power and superhuman in indurance. There was rooted the patriotism that nought could blight or trample out. Each generation has put forth healthy buds, and even when cut through to the very heart hardy scions have flourished at its roots.

A very handsome oil portrait of Washington also hung in the State House. It was painted after the original by the celebrated English artist, Sully.

The Raleigh Female Academy and the Male Academy were located in the same grove. The first mentioned was presided over by Miss Benedict, a lady of such fine attainments and estimable character that she seemed especially fitted for that place.

Generations after the good lady had passed away she lived in the memory of the descendants of her pupils, showing how her name had been a household word.

The Male Academy was in charge of a worthy Presbyterian, the Rev. Dr. Mack, who energetically taught the boys during the week and preached on the Sabbath. The schools were both excellent and well patronized by the citizens and wealthy planters skirting the city. They had interesting exhibitions at the close of the term, at which the young ladies vied with one another for prizes and medals. The writing and reading of compositions was an important feature of the exercises, each written in India ink, with a quill pen, and æsthetically tied with a blue ribbon.

It is now May, the month in which spring is most prodigal with her floral favors. There was to be a "May Queen" festival at the academy. Ada Chasseur who had led her class, was to graduate in June with high honors, even bearing off the gold medal; and her intelligence, her beauty, and her popularity had still farther honored her, by making her Queen of May. A large platform had been erected in the grove, the trees surrounding it festooned with garlands of flowers and evergreens, the platform carpeted and a throne beautifully decorated. A band of musicians was engaged to discourse sweet strains for the occasion, and Colonel Chasseur had fulfilled his promise that a new silver mounted car-

riage should be in time for the "royal procession."

The academy was nearly filled with baskets and waiters, contributions to the feast. The festival was to be an enjoyable social event. In the morning impatient children and crowds of interested spectators commenced to gather. The entire school in procession went to the edge of the grove to meet the queen. She was escorted by twelve special maids of honor and the rest of the school to the applause of the admiring multitude; twelve little girls dressed in white, with blue sashes and shoulder knots, scattered flowers along the pathway to the throne and seated themselves upon ottomans about the queen's feet, while the maids in waiting arranged themselves in a semi-circle around her. Miss Ann Worthington read an appropriate address and Miss Martha Shotwell placed the crown upon the lovely head of the queen. The old men smiled, the young men shouted, and the band played.

When the ceremonies were over the throng separated and such groups gathered as age and congeniality made agreeable. The throne was soon surrounded by the belles and beaux of the county, all in holiday attire, making a very attractive and sprightly company. The graceful manners, intelligence, and wit spoke well for the nobility of the little court.

Charles Lauenders, a bright young fellow who attended the academy said, "Miss Jannette, I have been more curious about that *mysterious whisper* than anything I ever heard of before."

"Now honestly, Charles, haven't you a ventriloquist in your school, that you sent over to worry Miss Benedict?"

"No, 'pon my word of honor we knew nothing about it until Miss Benedict sent over to Doctor Mack, to know if any of the boys were out, that she was greatly annoyed by someone whistling. Doctor called the roll, and laid in wait for Josh Crawford; but when Josh came in he as good as swore he hadn't been near the academy. Old Mack ought to have known that Josh's nose wouldn't let him get within a mile of it, and his mouth is so big if he had whiffed a whistle it would have blown the old thing over."

"I wish he had whiffed then," said Mary Grafton, laughing.

"Well," said Jannette, "Doctor Mack let him off, didn't he?"

"Let him off? I only wish he had," he said, with the air of a martyr.

"Why," asked Julia Semloh, smiling at the funny fellow.

"Why?" he ejaculated. "Old Mack made him whistle ten minutes for punishment, and every living man of us had a crick in the neck from the draught."

Interrupting their laughter, Jannette said, "I don't think he ought to have been punished; it was only circumstantial evidence, and slim at that."

"Josh wasn't punished, but his audience went into a rapid decline. There was but one man left when

he got through, and that was old Mack; and now he is so deaf he can't hear a lesson."

"It turned out that much of a 'windfall,' anyway?" laughed Jannette.

"Yes, sir, Josh's tune was a windfall, any way it turned."

Louise, who was still seated on the ottoman arranging her flowers, said, "Well, it was not right for that poor boy to suffer for what we girls did."

"Fie, Louise!" said Martha; "telling tales out of school."

"But, Cousin Martha, the right ones ought to bear the blame."

"The child is right," said Jannette, laughing.

"I knew you girls had been up to some mischief!" exclaimed Charles.

"Well, do not let Miss Benedict know of it," said Martha, "for it commenced accidentally. One of the girls, I will not say who, whistled. Miss Benedict's eyes flashed fire in that direction and just as she opened her lips to speak to Susan — I mean —"

"Hold on!" said Charles gleefully, "while I run over the list of Susans."

"No, you won't!" said Jannette; "we are not going to tell who started it."

"I don't want you to tell who did it," laughed Charles. "I'll just watch your countenance, and I can tell the minute you hit the right Susan."

"The girls are right, Charles; stop teasing them," said William Chasseur.

"All right, Miss Martha; begin where you left off when Susan Worthington whistled."

"I didn't do any such thing," said that little lady indignantly, "at least not until it got too thick among the large girls, and then I just whistled to help them out."

"Then," said Jannette, "after the thing got started we were obliged to keep it going around to prevent Mrs. Benedict locating it. It was a strange thing, like a restless spirit flying from one side of the house to the other. Miss Benedict got so demoralized she dismissed school."

"I believe she thought it was a ghost," said one of the little girls.

"It was," said Charles solemnly, "and everyone who whistled will surely die."

"Oh, Miss Martha, will we?" asked the children, with wide-open eyes.

But Charles' merry laugh was too contagious to need other reply.

"I am sorry that Job, or whatever you call him, was punished," said Jannette.

"Job Josh," said Charles comically, "wasn't punished. His whistling so contracted his mouth he has not been able to recite since. Humph! Job has come off triumphant."

And thus passed the happy hours, as only hours can pass when a merry party of school children are having a gala day.

The boys of the academy gave a ball that evening,

complimentary to the young ladies. Geeter's dining hall was brilliantly lighted and everything arranged for an enjoyable evening.

CHAPTER VII

FESTINA LENTE

“There was much visiting to and fro among the county families.”—THWAITES.

THE merry party at Vernal-Dune had increased in numbers. Misses Laura and Anne Kerba, with their brother Simmons, had arrived. Mr. Jameston of Petersburg was daily expected, but traveling had to be done by stage or private conveyance, and due allowance made for the weather, the roads, the horses, and also for the inclination of the traveler as to whether the trip should be made with dispatch or pursued with the usual view to comfort and pleasure. If a wayside inn was reached, the accommodations good, the fresh country air healthful, the rural scenery pleasing, why not loiter a day or two, while the horses refreshed themselves by kicking up their heels in green pastures and wallowing in the cool damp earth to erase the harness prints with which the heat and dust of the road had marked them, or when stopping in the heat of some noon at a smithy, while the horses' feet are examined and tinkered at — have the huge lunch basket removed to the shade trees near a spring, and from its liberal depths feast with

a relish that is rarely known in this dyspeptic age of fast eaters, fast travelers, and fast living generally.

It was true that sometimes Sambo, when he had his lunch, indulged too freely in the wine that was left. The mixed brands took effect after resuming the journey, and the spirited horses soon found it could be "a go-as-you-please race." Pitching the tipsy darkey out into the sand, away they would dash, until stopped by someone on the roadside or the length of a steep hill convinced them their little joke had been carried far enough. Then the faithful footman would be promoted to the boot, and the discomfited coachman, in great humiliation, would be made to take a back seat, from which he could fall with less danger to himself as well as the occupants of the carriage. However, it was not often such adventures disturbed the equanimity of travelers. They might doze in conscious safety or follow the thread of some narrative or discuss a favorite hobby, without interruption to a drowsy companion, or loll back upon upholstered seats in pleasant meditation with even the arms supported and swinging with every motion of the carriage, with time and opportunity for enjoying the healthful odors of the forest, for hearing the sighing of the pines, and feeling a nearness to nature that is impossible in other ways of traveling, where the eye and brain are wearied by fast receding objects sweeping by a car window.

In this day of pressing hurry it is even refreshing to think of a period, however remote, in which there

was no need for perpetual haste, an era of such easy living, and a people of such temperament, that they enjoyed the hour as it came, and if they looked to the end at all, it was in the spirit of "*festina lente*." The easy and almost noiseless swing of the carriage as it rolled over moss-grown paths or plains of pine-straw, the shee! shee! of the sand as the restive horses labored through it, tossing their manes and switching their tails impatiently at the persistent flies, until the damp fragrant atmosphere laden with marshy odors forecast the cool shadows of the brook, then the clicking grating sound as the steel tires strike the pebble-coated margin. The thirsty horses champ their bits and shake their heads while the restraining martingales are being unfastened, gratefully they touch their lips to the clear dimpling water, and with enjoyable carefulness sip the passing current, and as if loath to be satisfied again and again take a mouthful but to strain through their half-closed teeth the trickling drops making myriads of little circles, that break their reflection into tremulous, fragmentary shadows. Then a bunch of bay flowers, white dogwood, jessamine, or shell-like ivy is within easy reach, or a glimpse of rich muscadines, its luxuriant vine spreading its tempting feast from one side of the brook to the other, and by way of invitation thrusting its graceful tendrils in at the carriage window. The reins tighten, the word is given, the horses pull up the damp ascent, and onward they go, with renewed vitality. Perhaps from a busi-

ness point of view this mode of traveling does not compare favorably with the more expeditious facilities of the present day, but there was an independence of movement, a restfulness of mind pleasant to contemplate, that must have been more enjoyable and better for the nervous system than the present bustle and smoke of the modern railway — not mentioning the competitive demoniacal demonstrations of rival hackmen.

Instead of society people crowding into one evening a half dozen or more entertainments, and merely sipping the froth of each, finding little to satisfy intellect or heart, the élite of the early century leisurely partook from the cup of pleasure, not its sparkle only, but the exhilaration and strength associations will infuse. Invited guests went at their leisure to some noted country seat. The result was a happy house party lasting weeks, perhaps a summer or a winter, or the scenes shifting as their fancy moved them from one place to another.

Ye hurried belated travelers who arrive only in time to catch sight of the receding train of cars as you mop your heated brow, repressing certain inarticulate perorations may be in the humor to give “ye olde tymes” its just claim to some advantages. Say what you will about modern improvements, it must be admitted that our ancestors never got left!

CHAPTER VIII

“YE GOODE OLDE TYME”

“Some glowing pictures of life in these ‘baronial halls,’ with their great open fireplaces, rich furnishings imported from England, crowds of negro lackeys, bounteous larders, and general air of crude splendor, have come down to us.”—
THWAITES.

GREAT preparations were going on at Vernal-Dune. Mrs. Chasseur had given Miss Barbara directions concerning cakes, wafers, custards, and jellies, conferring with her on the subject of meats and salads, until that good lady’s culinary enthusiasm reached such a height that she bid fair to eclipse all other performances of similar occasions. Large orders had been left with the leading caterer for such ornamental confections as were thought desirable. The capacious kitchen, with its extensive hearth stretching nearly from side to side of the room and extending far toward the middle of the floor, was all a-bustle with huge pots and kettles swinging from the racks, and numerous ovens, skillets, and spiders, setting on piles of fire, with their great tops glowing beneath red-hot coals. Aunt Hannah, Aunt Peggy, Mam Phoebe, and Mam Violet, in their short cotton frocks, clean “kerchiefs” and “head handkerchief”

made a stirring scene, turning the cooking utensils, pushing and pulling out, taking off, or putting on coals, as the contents of ovens required, with such skill and satisfaction at the process of the baking characteristic only of a *Southern* cook of "ye olden tyme."

"Sis Hannah, jest look dar! I neber seed a likelier bake, jest done ernuff, 'thout a speck of scorch nowhere."

"Well, ain't it now! If dey's all as scrumcious as dat dis party is gine to take the rag offen de bush! Here, Sis Hannah, ketch holt this hook, and less drag it out a little. Dar! that'll do. I wouldn't have it ter fall, nohow. What dat you say, Margaret?"

"Miss Barb'ry say is yer got room 'nuff fer nudder cake?"

"In corse we is. When did you eber see de time thar want room in dis kitchen? and if dar ain't, dar's de laundry chimerley, as big as t'other folkes kitchen. Mars Theo don't bleve in skimertin' 'bout cooking nor nothin' else, he don't. You Mar'g'rt! Mar—ger—it," elevating her voice, for Margaret had joined a group of little darkies who were seesawing at some distance from the kitchen.

Margaret was standing in the middle of the plank, as she rocked back and forth, first on one side of the fence and then the other, her faded skirt puffing out in the wind, but too narrow to do much flying.

Aunt Phoebe peered through the kitchen door in a

surreptitious, side-long manner, as if pouncing upon the delinquent just outside was a natural sequence; but as Margaret had been attracted by the noise of the children, so was Aunt Phoebe.

"I clare fore God, dese young uns is a 'nuff to aggrivoke a saint. Miss Barb'ry's scake er-gitting sot back, and dat or-da-cious nigger a-ridin' of de fence! You, Mar-grit! if you don't go dis bressed minit and tell Miss Barb'ry — Yes'em, I'll make yo' kerchy lower an' dat! Is dat you, Ransom? Come in here an' he'p me off wid dis pot. Dinner got to be done time, in course party or no party."

"Sure case this cabbage smells high," said Ransom, as the steaming odor greeted him.

"This is ferd ernuff, Ransom; it musten git cold."

"Do you want t'others down?"

"No; they's hams fer the party. I'm a-feared dey ain't done yet. But this ole gobbler looks like a Christmas picter'. Dick!" she called, as she spied him trotting across the yard, "go tell yer daddy ter send —"

"Mammy, I ain't got no time, I got ter take 'Fayette," said Dick, hurrying on to the gate, where his young master had just ridden up accompanied by several gentlemen.

"Yer lazy hound! Bound yer allers got time for 'Fayette! Here, Lisbon, honey, run ask yer Uncle Tom to send de pa'sley. Here's a pan."

"Bur'el," said Mam Violet, "take that pan,— not dat, the big one,— and run down ter de kiln fer

the 'taters. Pick 'em, Bur'el, they's fer the 'great house.' "

"Easter," said Aunt Judy, "I'se got the las' pies on de waiter. Cair 'em ter Miss Barb'ry and tell her there's four more pastries."

Here Margaret came flying in, her movements being regulated by the degree of importance or rather the interest she felt in the errand. To be able to stir up the inmates of the kitchen to some degree of anger or indignation was considerable impetus.

"Lor, mammy, General Daniel's dog drug de ham offen de table, and Miss Barb'ry say you'll ha' ter send her anudder one!"

"De Lord o'mighty! Mam Vi'let! you hear dat? De orda-cious ole cuss, how come he couldn't wait tell his time come — unmannered, slab-sided old critter! See here, Margrit, you run along back and fetch me dat ham."

"Why, mammy, yer ain't gwine to eat what the dog is et, is yer?"

"No, you fool! What de dog is et he's et, and what he ain't et is left dar. He ain't pizon, as I knows on. No kane ter fling away de hole ham 'cause de dog totch it. Now mind what I say. Don't I knock yer head off."

"Mammy," said Dick, approaching with his tin-cup, "gimme some pot-licker?"

"Yes, here yer come nosen round like General Daniel's ole dog. How come you can't wait for your dinner?"

“ Well, I’s e gwine ter wait fer my dinner whilst I eats my supe. De white folks eats dey supe whilst dey waits.”

She gave a depreciatory grunt, but filled his cup, and sitting down on the doorstep Dick regaled himself with great relish.

Ransom came in with a large tureen and sundry dishes and platters, while Bur’l, Esther, Lisbon, and Matilda followed with others. The turtle soup was sufficiently odoriferous to sharpen the appetite of the most fastidious epicure. With the assistance of several more servants the dinner was served in the commodious dining-room as usual.

The well known and appreciated hospitality of Vernal-Dune made every day a dining. No meal time ever approached that did not find elaborate and appetizing viands, and spread with such liberality that the quality or quantity of guests made little difference. No especial preparations were necessary before hazarding an invitation to a hunting party, and there was some reason in Aunt Phoebe’s querulous question, “ Why General Daniel’s old hound couldn’t wait until his time come,” for a quantity of meal was cooked into pones of bread every day, which, with sundry scraps from the table and stock from various boiled pots, made liberal feed.

It is not out of place here to say a word in extenuation of that oft and almost incredible sigh for “ ye good old times ” we of a later generation have so often heard, and are wont to say, “ Ye good old times

indeed! Why, you had no railroads." No, but we had our private carriage. If it was some distance and we preferred no delay, there were relays of horses: it took longer to get from one place to another, but the exercise was healthful and agreeable.

"But you had no gas, no electric lights."

No, but we had wax candles. Their beautiful soft light thrust forth from unique silver candelabra, and oil lamps, those antique things of bronze and marble, that the æsthetes of to-day hear of, and refuse to be comforted, because they are not.

"But you had no furnace, range, stove, or grate."

No, but we had huge logs of resinous pine that men servants kept piled high on curiously wrought and-irons — that threw such a happy glow over a Christmas hearth it seemed the embodied spirit of merry "Kris Kringle" diffused itself over all the occupants of a room until their very shadows cut comic capers from the great joy within. And we had hewers of wood and drawers of water.

Thus might the illimitable list of modern improvements be run through, and the reply would still be with imperturbable pertinacity.

No, we had not those things, but we had money, and Money answereth all things, and last but not least we had retinues of well-trained servants, so many indeed, there were no circumstances to be imagined that could in any way interrupt the smooth running of the domestic machinery. No department was disorganized or interrupted on account of sick-

ness; the sick were kindly cared for, man, woman, or child as the case might be, but there were too many cooks, laundry women, men-servants and maids for any casualty to scotch the machinery. It was always in good working order.

Mrs. Chasseur as wife, mother, and mistress was indeed a blessing to the household. So sweet in character and fair of face, she was almost idolized by the entire plantation. She was ever ready with a kind comforting word for the aged and encouragement for the young; even her gentle remonstrance carried with it an aroma of kindliness that seemed to penetrate the hearts of the most careless and obdurate.

Now this was before "Old John Brown came marching on." No infection had been sown among the negroes; they were inherited property and the two races, having always lived in the relative position of master and servant, were a mutual help to each other. A deep interest, and even affection, existed between them, such as only lifelong ties and uninterrupted associations of good and evil can engender. The old negroes passing into the hands of a younger generation held their places with something of an humble dignity such as kindly respect accorded them, not only on account of their valuable services, but also because of their positions as father's body servant, mother's maid, the family nurse, or the colored mammy of their own childhood; and thus the ties innumerable held them together.

Parents would relate with feeling incidents in which, during sickness and trouble, the negro servants were unselfish and faithful; and then again the incidents recorded would be drolly humorous. In this way much traditional history of a race was gathered and transmitted from generation to generation; "naught set down in malice," but every good point brought boldly forth to be appreciated and rewarded. The children of a family were so familiarized with the traits and character of the race that a most harmonious adjustment of natural laws to the fitness of things was established, and the Maker and Ruler of all things seemed to recognize this fitness as He did in the old patriarchal age, when he not only permitted a similar relationship to exist, but admonished a refractory maid to return to her mistress and subject herself unto her.

These old negroes never forgot or grew tired of talking about "Old Master and Old Miss." Often scraps of conversation might be overheard in which was blended much pride and affection.

"I 'clare 'fore gracious I loves to look at Mars Theo. He gits more like his pa ev'y day he lives. Got the same ha'r and eyes like his pa's, for all de world."

"Yes, he is, Mam Vi'let, nuf like as two black-eyed peas, and they was both good-hearted and easy-lake."

"I remembers Ole Misses 'fore she died," said Phoebe.

"Of course yer does. You was a big gal, 'bout as big as Margrit. Ole Miss said to me, 'Vi'let, I bleve you'll be good to my dear little boy'—that was Mars Theo."

"Yes, Mam Vi'let, I reckerlecks it, 'cause Mars Harry was de knee baby, and you was good ter him, 'caze I hear Mars Theo say so heself."

"Yes, Phoebe, he was a powerful wakeful chile. I'd walk de floor wid him tell soon as I sot down I'd drap off ter sleep fore I knowed it. Me and Miss Irene raised dat chile. She was one good omman, but we is all got ter die. Yes, Phœbe, we's all got ter die."

"Dat's so, Mam Vi'let, beyant a reason'ble doubt."

"Matildy, is dat you? Wash dem two pans there on the table. I 'clare fore gracious I got ter have er dip o' snuff or break a trace."

With a sigh of intense satisfaction she seated herself and proceeded to take her dip, after which she would get her usual nap or spend the rest of the evening as she pleased. She was a good cook and liked to help about the dinners, but the most of her time was spent in the house ordering the younger maids about.

It is a peculiarity of the race to be domineering, and it matters not what may be their affection for their children or their dog, they assert their authority with no light hand.

CHAPTER IX

GENTLEMEN OF LEISURE

ONE of the gentlemen who accompanied William was his friend William Jameston. He had visited Vernal-Dune before, when a youth, and had now come by special invitation to make one of a gay house party. He was the only child of a wealthy Virginia aristocrat. There had been no hurry about choosing a profession, as he had been a close student. Of a naturally quiet, thoughtful disposition and rather slight build, with blue eyes and blonde hair, perhaps delicate looking, no one would have called him effeminate. There was such strength of character in his intellectual face, that even before he spoke manifested plenitude of mental and moral power.

Now as they retired from the dining-room, it being a lovely spring day, some of the guests gathered in the porch.

Jannette's attention had been called to a cluster of roses, and as she walked out into the yard with Mr. Jameston she observed:

"I am glad that you came at this especial time, Mr. Jameston."

"I am sure," he replied, his face lighting up with a smile both pleased and questioning, "it could never

be anything else than a pleasure to me, but you greatly enhance that pleasure by the assurance that this coming has not been inopportune."

"The arrival of a friend could never be that. You know how fond of company we all are, but I meant that it was nice for Brother William to have some of his gentleman friends with him, now that we have so many girls with us. You will each help the other pass the time more agreeably."

There was a perceptible fall of the pleasurable temperature of Mr. Jameston's expression as he looked at Jannette a moment, and as the pink deepened on her fair face the glance of his thoughtful eyes merely moved beyond her. Then throwing from him a handful of rose leaves that had fallen from its stem as he touched it, he replied:—

"Miss Jannette, I think Vernal-Dune and its charming inmates always agreeable, without any exterior or imported adjuncts."

"Oh, certainly," she replied, somewhat archly, "but be candid and natural enough to agree with me—you know the more the merrier."

"I wish I might dare be. I will at least venture this much," he said, with a flicker of a smile, "I am not sure about the preference for a mirthful multitude. I find a decided pleasure in the presence of *only one*."

"Fie, Mr. Jameston! I did not imagine you so selfish. A gentleman of your intelligence ought to be able to entertain more than one."

"It is not a question of capability, Miss Jannette, but preference."

"Well," said she, moving slowly toward the porch, "you may do as you please, but you must impartially divide your time."

"Why should you enforce a division of my time, when Henry Shotwell talked with you a full hour before dinner. At that rate he will not get around."

"I am not counted in," she said, laughing. "I merely fill a place when it is hopelessly vacant."

"Ah, well, that is better. I am glad that your time is not under restrictions. Of course as perfect hostess you will fill the vacancies."

"Or see that they are filled," she corrected, laughing.

They had reached the porch. The gentlemen had proposed a fox hunt for the following morning, in which several of the ladies would join — Misses Anne Kerba, Martha Shotwell, Julia Semloh, and Ada.

"Miss Jannette, you will join the hunting party, will you not?" asked General Daniel, taking her arm as she ascended the steps.

"No, I think not. I detest early rising, and the only time I did go I felt so sorry for the poor fox. I didn't enjoy it at all, not even the ride."

"Ha! ha! ha!" roared the General. "Who ever heard of such a fox hunter? Felt sorry for the poor fox. Ha! ha! but you can go *deer hunting* '*sub-rosa*' without any compunction." This last was said

in a whisper, but the rich color mounted Jannette's face, and pulling away from the General's detaining hand she ran into the house, while the General indulged in another good-natured laugh and slyly winked at Jameston. That gentleman had not the slightest idea what he had to do with the hunt, but the whisper, the blush and the hunt seemed to have some connection which he would liked to have solved.

However, his attention was called in another direction. Colonel Chasseur addressed him. The Colonel was a handsome, genial man, with no affected dignity of manner to sustain a vaunted individuality. He had inherited from honorable progenitors distinctive marks that signalized the true gentleman. There was a rich heartiness of tone, an enjoyable laugh, a cordial interest and pleasure in the enjoyment of his family, and guest, that made him a perfect host.

"Mr. Jameston," he asked, "have you decided upon a profession? Or is it enough for you to manage your estates?"

Young Jameston never spoke hurriedly, and now there was a slight pause between question and answer; then he said:

"I am somewhat troubled on that point. My father, I am sorry to say, differs from me in regard to the choice of a profession. He thinks I am not over-strong —"

"Well," interrupted the Colonel, "there is time enough. A season or two in sporting or traveling will set you all right. See William, how he has

improved. You know this college work, like a hot-bed, makes you shoot right up white and tender; it is better to get a little more fiber to the constitution. William does more now of everything else than study. When there is no interval of dependence, this getting right down to work is not necessary. A gentleman can afford to take life easy. Where there is a super-abundance of brain there should be a hobby. You see, the mind likes to grow; it is always reaching up higher and higher. There is little for it to take hold of in its effort to rise, in mere pastime and pleasures, it needs something to stimulate it, and there is where the profession comes in. Study keeps up the mental standard while the recreations keep up the physical man. I am glad William has made a choice. This medical science is a fine ladder for the mind. It will have to mount high if it would see its way clearly among the afflicted of the earth. There is a difference between a gentleman of leisure and a lazy man. The first has time at his disposal, the latter is at the disposal of time."

Jameston smiled. "You are right, sir; I cannot imagine a worse condition than to be at the mercy of time without mental defence. I shall certainly endeavor to dispose of my time with advantage to myself and others."

"Well, there is time enough for you to settle down. You will have to be stronger to do justice to yourself. If you follow William in the saddle a month or two they won't know you at home."

"I do not think a visit to so healthy and agreeable a place as Vernal-Dune could be without benefit, and I am specially contented to be a guest, though a fortnight must be the length of my stay."

"Tut, tut! that is nothing at all. A delicate person is apt to feel worse from any change at first. Now you will feel only fatigue from your rides, and later their benefit; besides," he added, laughing, "if you follow William in the saddle a week you will not be able to leave soon after."

"I must have an eye to that," replied the young man pleasantly.

"I think Semloh is making up a party to go with him down home — old Sampson, you know. You must not miss that sport. Are you a good shot?"

"Not at all. I have been raised in a city, with few rural sports. My recreations and accomplishments are those afforded by such environments."

"Ah, yes, theatres, lectures, concerts, etc. By the way, are you fond of music? You must have Sarah play for you. She performs well on the piano and harp. Professor Gonica says she plays with more expression and better time than any girl in the State."

"Does Miss Jannette play?"

"The little rogue! She catches by ear and plays easily everything the others study out."

Jameston smiled. "You spoke of my not being able to leave Vernal-Dune if I followed William.

I am sure it will be much more difficult if I remain in company of your charming daughter."

This was said playfully, but his color deepened.

"Between two fires, eh?" laughed the Colonel. Hyman and McKinnon here rode up.

Jameston slyly remarked: "It looks as though this is Cupid's headquarters. I am counting myself in, Colonel."

"Well, young folks must enjoy themselves; besides, I think there is safety in numbers."

"But it increases the complications of a very intricate and hazardous undertaking," said Jameston, his color fluctuating like a girl's.

"That is true," returned the Colonel, "but there is little sport without a race."

The general greeting of the gentlemen interrupted the conversation, the subject of which was very near Jameston's heart.

When evening approached, the bright lights gleaming from the windows, the gay chatter and merry laughter testified to the enjoyment of the party. Hyman and Miss Laura Kerba were having a lively discussion; her sister Anna and William seemed entirely satisfied with their cosy corner; Sarah and McKinnon were oblivious of the others; Jameston and Simmons Kerba were arguing some point with Miss Julia; General Daniel was trying to overcome Jannette's repugnance to hunting the "poor fox," while Semloh and Ada were disputing over a move in chess and called the General as arbiter.

Jameston immediately availed himself of the vacant chair by Jannette.

"I think vacant seats have been proscribed, have they not?" he asked, smiling.

"But the duty of filling them was not imposed upon you," she replied quizzically.

He colored somewhat, asking softly, "What must I infer from that?"

"Only that we are a lively set of girls, always ready at repartee."

"Without counting the cost, whether it may cause encouragement or despondency?" he asked.

"Not exactly, only when the subject is a light one."

"Well," said he, smiling, "let's get at that more clearly. I think our subject was a vacancy; that vacancy was near you. You will not make light of that, will you?"

"How can I?" she asked laughingly, "when I am completely in the dark."

"May I throw more light on the subject?" he asked, his thoughtful eyes looking clearly into hers.

"We are wandering entirely from the original subject — vacancies. I suppose light may be thrown into a vacuum, but you must admit that *nothing* is a poor reward for scientific research."

The thoughtful expression of his clear blue eyes was intensified. Humoring the metaphor, he continued: "Yes, but a miner in search of hidden treasures must find an unclaimed portion — a vacancy, if

you will," smiling, "and only then may he honorably drive his stake."

The saucy Jannette was so well cornered she scarcely knew what to answer, but tried to hide her embarrassment in gay banter.

"Well, Mr. Jameston, I can only say that if the field referred to is my conversational powers or mental capacity, your explorations will not pay you."

"I have heard of just such discouragement being given to other explorers, but I am determined not to be so easily discouraged; I am too desirous of winning. 'Nothing ventured nothing won.'"

At this point Shotwell interrupted them. "Jameston, Cousin Sarah wants you to sing with her."

Before leaving Jannette he said earnestly: "Miss Jannette, I have met with no encouragement, but I have at least driven my stake."

CHAPTER X

FOX-HUNTING

THE sun rose over Vernal-Dune bright and rosy as a maiden's dream. The huntsman's horn sounded long and clear, bringing together the scattered hounds in yelping ecstasy. The blinds of an upstairs window opened, and William hailed the sportsmen below.

"All right, boys, come in; we'll be down in a minute."

As he passed along the hall he rapped at a closed door: "Say, in there, are you girls up?"

"Yes, long ago," was the response. "We will be down by the time you all are ready."

William met the gentlemen coming in — Dr. Hyman, General Daniel, Mr. Peter Brown and General Edney. As they passed to the sideboard to take a "constitutional," a waiter of toast and coffee was taken upstairs to the girls. Then out came Shotwell, Kerba, Semloh, and Jameston. The last mentioned took coffee instead of wine.

Soon Sarah, Ada, Julia, and Anne came running down, and as they were mounting William Boyden, familiarly known as "Buck," to distinguish him

from his father, galloped up. "Buck" was a jovial clever fellow, a gentleman of leisure, and could be relied on to make one of a gay hunting party. He was accompanied by Charles Launders.

After the usual greeting, Charles asked: "Miss Ada, where is Miss Jannette?"

"My dear boy, she is still in the land of dreams. She sat up later than usual last night, and you know her motto, 'Early to bed and late to rise.'"

"What was the unusual attraction that kept her up last night?"

As he asked the question his eyes met those of Mr. Jameston, and, though provoking and uncalled for, they both colored.

Jameston smiled and extended his hand, "Why, Launders, I did not recognize you at first—you have run up so. I remember you were quite a shaver when I was here before."

"Yes," said the boy; "you have been growing some too. When did you come?"

"Yesterday."

They moved off together as the party rode on. General Daniel galloped back and forth, sometimes lagging behind to chatter with the girls, sometimes rushing forward to locate the dogs. Once he quickly raised his hand to his ear in a listening attitude, saying to Semloh, "That bark sounds very much like Fleet."

"Well, it may be. What of it?"

"No, it can't be. You see he is a little lame, and

I was afraid to let him run to-day. I shut him up at home."

It was a perfect morning for a race, the spring air just right for the exercise, and the gay party was enjoying it. Gallant men and beautiful ladies, all were fine riders, and their pleasure was increased by the spice of expectancy at the end of the run. Repartee was more brilliant, laughter more joyous, eyes brighter, cheeks rosier, and hearts lighter this morning as Nature was given fair play to evolve a perfect race of men and women. It is not to be wondered that the descendants of this race of people proved to be of the most chivalrous and brave, those whose phenomenal endurance through the hardships of war immortalized their race and their country.

The party had kept a well-beaten way. Upon reaching the top of a hill the practiced ear of the huntsmen caught the familiar sound of the hounds in hot pursuit of the fox. William called to the girls to keep the path in a brisk run, while he and General Daniel made a detour of the woods in the wake of the dogs. Now came the excitement, the fox might pass at any point of the way, and as he dodged back and forth through the forest, his distance or proximity signaled by the low or loud barking of the dogs, the sudden halt of the equestrians, the hurried breath, the eager eye, the graceful pose, the race renewed with fresh interest — all testified to the pleasure so little understood by those who are

ignorant or indifferent to the sport. It is a scene too active for an artist's brush.

Dick, mounted bareback on "old Bet," had his full share of the sport. He knew every fence that had to be lowered, and he could tell which fences were between dogs and riders, and never failed to be on time with an outlet for the ladies. His skillful riding and scientific manner of demolishing a panel of fence were a source of amusement for the girls.

"I could swear that Fleet is in that pack," said General Daniel, putting spurs to his horse and clearing the fence, "but how in the thunder he got there I can't tell. I didn't only tie him, but I locked the door."

"Humph!" ejaculated Semloh. "That villainous pack has let the fox give them the slip again," and they paused a moment from pursuit.

Jameston and Launders had turned and raced back at a promising bay, but finding that the dogs were again outwitted they were returning with slackened pace, as if awaiting a more satisfactory signal for pursuit, when a stone's-throw away old Reynard paused with nose in the air and foot lightly raised, ready at a moment's warning to take flight.

Charles, in true huntsman's spirit, grasped his horn to call the dogs, but just as it touched his lips Jameston caught his arm, causing only a broken note, and the fox taking warning loped noiselessly into the thicket.

"Hello! What's up?" exclaimed Charles.

"I only wanted to gratify a certain little lady. She will be greatly pleased to hear that the 'poor fox' escaped," replied Jameston, smiling.

"Miss Jannette!" exclaimed Charles. "I am glad you knocked me. I'd be knocked off my horse to please her. I know what she thinks about hunting, but I never thought — you see it is so exciting."

"Yes, and I know my move was very unsportsman-like, but I have been raised in a city and really would have to cultivate anything like your enthusiasm."

"See here, Mr. Jameston, these fellows will never let us hear the last of this."

"Oh! it was not your fault. I don't care for their chaffing. I will have Miss Jannette on my side."

"Well, that's something; I wish I had thought of it myself," said the boy regretfully.

"Really, Launderers, your acquiescing so readily and our motive for not blowing the horn is the same. We will share Miss Jannette's pleasure, and I will let the fellows know I am the inexperienced sportsman."

"That is mighty generous in you," said Charles, laughing merrily.

"Oh, no, there is no generosity in merely telling the truth, my young friend."

"Well — yes — sometimes," said Charles, eyeing Jameston so quizzically that the latter was constrained to ask:

"Under what circumstances?"

Charles laughed. "Oh, it's no matter. I'm — I am afraid you will think me impertinent."

"No, out with it."

"You are here to see Miss Jannette?"

"Am I poaching?" asked Jameston, smiling.

"Oh, no; I am just her age. She will be sure to marry before I get through college, but I like her better than any girl I know."

"Well, Launderers, I admire her too. I think the entire family the most agreeable I ever visited."

Here the horn was sounded to recall the dogs. The riders quickened their pace and soon joined the party, which had halted, the question being whether they should return the way they had come or cut through a stretch of woods. William thought the way too rugged for the girls, so they turned their horses homeward in a brisk canter, all agreeing that it had been a most delightful chase, notwithstanding the fox had outwitted them.

General Daniel declared the game worthy the pursuers.

When they reached home the family were all up and out to greet them. Miss Jane Semloh and Laura Kerba, when they heard the dogs and horns so near, as it were, coming back with a flourish of trumpets, had run out to catch a glimpse of the chase.

Glowing accounts were given of an unusually exciting race.

"Strange," said William, "none of us saw the fox."

"You are mistaken; I saw him," said Jameston, smiling.

"Why in the name of wonder did you not keep up with him? Where were the dogs? Charles, where were you?"

"Oh, the fox saw Charles," replied Jameston, with a comic air of having given all the information necessary, which not only amused the ladies, but was sufficient excuse for them.

But not so with the huntsmen. They pressed the matter with such spirit that Jameston said, "Miss Jannette, knowing your sympathy for old Reynard, Lauanders and I would not betray him."

Amid the impatient exclamations of the gentlemen, Jannette ran forward, giving a hand to each of her abettors.

"You dear, good fellows!" she exclaimed delightedly; "that is what I call being clever. The others may think it a boasting matter to overrun one poor lone fox, but see how little skill it shows compared with you two outwitting the hunting party and a pack of dogs. That is something to talk about."

"Great heavens!" ejaculated Peter Brown. "She puts us along with the dogs."

"Never fear," said Hyman, "you will hear it talked of to your regret, young gentleman."

"I did not know before," said Jannette, "that one could help the fox by going with the hunters, or I would have gone."

"Then," replied Jameston, "you must go with us

next time, and we will give Sir Reynard all the assistance we can."

"And, General," she said, with entrapping demureness, "you will lend me your swiftest horse."

"Certainly, certainly."

"And Fleet?"

"With all my heart," he answered, with ready gallantry.

"And," she slyly added, "your horn?"

"Bless you, dear, yes, yes."

"And Charles shall teach me all the sight signals, and I will blow when I don't see him."

"You will have to be unusually long winded if the chase is after the order of to-day," declared Hyman.

"There is no danger of her not succeeding," said Jameston, laughing, "for in the outstart she leaves your general *hors de combat*."

Breakfast was announced. The girls ran off to remove their riding habits and readjust their toilets. It was a happy party gathered around the well-spread table, and if mirth is good for the digestion as an active pepsin, it abounded at this board of good cheer. The huntsmen chaffed Jameston and Launders unmercifully, but Jannette's unaffected pleasure at the escape of the fox and unembarrassed humane comradeship overbalanced the sportsmen's sarcasm. The unusual termination of the chase was attended with more comment than the capture of the brush would have caused.

General Daniel said, "I call this morning's affair 'heart among hunters,'" directing his winks and nods at Jameston and Launderers. "It is a travesty on 'honor among thieves.' You may look out for the *Raleigh Register*. I intend to give Gales an account of it, not forgetting that the handsome Miss Laura K—— of Chapel Hill, in her eagerness to learn how the fox escaped, actually jeopardized the Colonel's fence by imposing upon it her weight of loveliness."

As Miss Laura was exceedingly plump, and as sweet-natured as she was handsome, with an amused laugh she replied:

"The justice of your compliment, General, is quite perceptible, but I insist that Jannette must share my publicity — her weight of influence entitles her to it."

When the amusement of this little by-play of words subsided, the General continued: "Gales is a ready writer — a very fine writer. He will elaborate the thing; you have not heard the last of it."

"There seems to be no end to it," said Charles, with affected sarcasm.

"It is to be continued from one hunt to the other," said Boyden.

"General," said Ada, "if you do not close your article with 'finis' out of consideration for your readers, let it be at least '*Commencement de la fin*,'" and with continued bantering they left the table.

Jannette sat down by the General, and turned to

him her pretty smiling face, with a bewitching air of interest, saying: "General, as we grow older in years and knowledge, don't you think we ought to improve in all things, hunting with the rest?"

"Now will everybody just hear this child?"

"Miss Jannette has the advantage, General," said Jameston, who had been listening with interest. "I have no doubt if such a humane idea was well ventilated, it would eventually be the basis for some such movement." And thus each kept a good-natured vantage ground which encouraged discussion.

It is worthy of mention here, and may be gratifying to true sportsmen who are fond of their dogs, and whose knowledge of them goes far to authenticate their wonderful sagacity — that when General Daniel returned to his bachelor quarters he found that his dog Fleet was in the room where he had left him, his nose was partly through the noose with which he had been tied, and his appearance indicating in every particular a morning hunt. There could be no doubt that the dog, hearing the horn in the distance, slipped the carelessly tied knot and made his escape through the window. During the hunt he kept out of sight of his master, and instead of following him after the hunt, as he was in the habit of doing, he returned to his post and made an effort to halter himself.

CHAPTER XI

A PARTY IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

It is a balmy night in May, with an atmosphere not only resplendent in the silvery sheen of an unclouded moon, but redolent with odors from flowering trees and vines, blown from the adjacent wood. It is a night favorable indeed to the guests en route for and continually arriving at Vernal-Dune. Here the fragrance and light reached its climax, for the flower garden gave forth its odors dew distilled with liberal power, and streams of light from numerous windows and doors proclaimed the genial host and hostess "At Home."

The maidens with their joyous faces and merry laughter flitted about in white muslin and colored ribbons. The older belles with modest mien and sprightly intelligence made no special *début*, to pose for admiration or to advertise their charms, but like their younger sisters had been nourished and grown in the protected conservatory of a Southern home and its best society. With all the innocence, beauty, and grace of the opening bud they had gradually evolved into such stages of perfect bloom that the

gentlemen of that era never knew when their admiration or adoration commenced. It grew with their growth and strengthened with their strength, and was not so subject to frost-nips as hot-house developments of colder climes.

The vivacious strains of the fiddle and the occasional emphasis of pirouetting pumps added to the evidence that a very happy party was having a good time. Naturally in so large a company they were variously entertained. The lovers had delightful *tête-à-têtes* in the moonlit porch and cosy nooks; others found much pleasure in the music, where the harp, piano and violin made very interesting music to amateur participants. Indeed, it was a concord of sweet sounds, and often deservedly *encored*.

Mr. Jameston had been introduced to many pretty girls. He had been unusually brilliant in conversation, but Jannette noticed that he had not danced at all, and, if the truth must be told, that little lady had expected several solicitations, at least from that gentleman. When he had visited them before she had danced with him often, and remembered his being unusually graceful. She had also heard her brother speak of William's dancing as being worthy of high praise. She had, however, too much self-respect to seem to notice his indifference, as it appeared to her, and it was also natural that as he did not seek her she with maidenly reserve almost involuntarily avoided him. As the evening wore on, more than once she passed him on her way to the

dancing room with some gay partner. Once when she returned to the parlor, he was standing apart from the rest of the company, and arrested her attention by asking how she was enjoying herself.

With her hand still resting on the arm of Charles Launderers she replied, "I am having a delightful time. But have you sounded the depths of all these fair conversationalists that you pose in such dignified silence?"

"Don't you dance?" asked Charles. "I find much solid comfort in landing on my feet when my head gives out; in fact, I am like a cork-headed acrobat. You may pull me down by the ear for a while, but very naturally my feet take to the floor."

"Miss Jannette, I am sure you had better rest a while," said Jameston, placing a chair for her, "and Charles, we will release your ear. That pretty lady over there in pink will, I am quite certain, make a charming partner."

"Whew!" whistled Charles. "If such a hint as that doesn't knock down it will at least scatter." And laughing good-naturedly he walked off.

Jameston sat down by Jannette, saying, "You have passed your time so agreeably, my not dancing may have escaped your notice."

"I am real sorry, Mr. Jameston," she said quickly, "but I thought of course that brother William had introduced you to the strangers, and I am sure you knew quite a number of ladies, anyway."

"I am not entering the omission as a complaint, Miss Jannette, but as an apology."

"Oh, you need not," she replied lightly, "for really there are more dancers than dances."

"I did not think for a moment that I had caused a vacancy that could not be filled,—what I meant was, that as a guest would my not dancing be considered a breach of etiquette, and would not my fair friend have cause to condemn my seeming indifference to avail myself of the honor and pleasure to which each guest is privileged?"

"Oh, well," said Jannette pleasantly, "there is nothing compulsory about our dancing etiquette—at least, so far as choosing partners is concerned. I have refused to dance with several myself." She did not tell him that she had kept these dances for him, but just at that moment her brother William joined them.

"Ah, here you are. I made Jannette keep several dances for you, William, knowing that you not only liked dancing, but a good partner also."

A rich glow suffused William Jameston's face, but the clear blue eyes looked steadily into those of his friend. He said without haste or hesitancy, "You know, William, I told you I had joined the church; I have not danced since then."

"But surely that need not keep you from dancing here—with only a party of friends." Then he added quickly, "But it is all right, William, if you

are enjoying yourself. I leave you in Jannette's hands," and he crossed the room to claim the hand of Miss Anne Kerba for the set forming.

"Do you think it a sin to dance?" asked Jannette.

"No," he replied. "Under some circumstances I think dancing an innocent and appropriate way of varying the amusement, when happy, light-hearted friends are assembled; and not to avail myself of those you kindly reserved for me is a temptation requiring considerable strength to resist."

"Oh, don't mention it," said Jannette hurriedly. "It was merely brother William's suggestion, and," smiling archly, "I don't always follow them."

"At any rate, to find you had no dance to give me does not lessen my seeming negligence in not soliciting that honor, and whether you would or would not have given me that pleasure," he said gently, "I had rather you understood my position in regard to it. When one thinks seriously of life and death, in which the old and young, the rich and poor, must all take their part, it must be acknowledged that living one's life involves a very great responsibility, and without being morbid we should consider its importance. Dancing does not induce serious thought."

"But," argued Jannette, "there are people who after deep and serious thought, dance as a rest for the mind, it being a pleasant recreation, and healthful exercise. I remember at the Legislators' ball how many elderly, dignified gentlemen danced. They

spoke of the exercise being very pleasant after the mental strain of the session."

"That may be true in some cases. They had been concentrating their minds upon the enactment of certain laws during a given time and under special limitations, and when they got through there was an end of it; besides, it was not done on one individual responsibility, but as a body, and it was expected to be revised or abolished the next session, if not expedient. But there are other laws to be studied and filed for enactment of more importance than those made by earthly legislators. And when one feels called to that work, and studies the subject, knowing these laws are for all time, and with all possible study, the focus of mental concentration is not attained this side of the grave, and each legislator or minister," he added softly, "is responsible individually for himself and for the people; the service is for life. You see it is a responsibility that cannot be lightly carried, nor can it ever be danced off."

Mr. Kerba interrupted them, requesting Jannette to favor him as his partner in the next cotillion.

She, however, gently remarked: "This is a dance I reserved for Mr. Jameston, and we are going to talk it out." Of course Mr. Kerba excused her and went in search of another partner.

Mr. Jameston said gratefully, "That is certainly kind; I feel now that you have accepted my excuses and apologies."

"Oh, don't speak of apologizing. I think it real good in you not to dance, even when you don't think it a sin."

"Not good," he gently corrected; "but you know there are older and wiser heads than mine who have studied the subject; they have put dancing under a ban. If any light recreations are necessary for the health of body and mind, I don't see why dancing should be excluded as especially worldly. I think if it had not been proscribed, as young people grow up and put away childish things that in proportion as the mind matured the frivolities of youth — dancing with the rest — would become less fascinating. I know that some people are of such light-hearted temperaments they seem never to mature. Their every thought and movement is the effervescence of gay spirits, while others are weighted down by a sense of responsibility — their natural temperament being too heavy to admit of any capering around. Others lean towards games requiring thought, and often the movers almost become the combatants."

Jannette laughed. "You are thinking of Cousin Henry's game of chess."

"Oh, I have seen much worse than that."

"Yet nobody thinks there is any harm in those games."

"It is a process of mind development," he said, smiling.

"Especially that of combativeness," she added slyly.

William now advanced, saying under his breath, "Jannette, for goodness' sake dance with Strong. No one else can pull him through without demoralizing the entire quadrille. He is like a true nine-pin ball — he knocks every pin on the floor."

"What an omnifarious dancer I must be," she said, shrugging her pretty white shoulders. "I am assigned to take charge of all kinds and conditions of dancers — the good, the bad, those that won't dance and those that will."

"Well," laughed William, "he certainly dances with a will, and a *strong* one at that."

"Oh, come now," said Hyman, "what a miserable pun! You will be comparing my steps to the Highland fling shortly."

"It will be shortly," laughed William, "and very short at that."

This provoked laughter, as Dr. Hyman was really short of stature.

"Well, Miss Jannette, this is our dance," said Hyman, offering his arm.

"See here, Hyman," interposed William, "you don't place all on the floor in jeopardy as Strong does."

"You should have said jumpardy," laughed Jannette.

"I see my gregarious partner coming, so you must excuse me."

"You are certainly amiable to listen to all of brother's suggestions, however disagreeable, and

while it would raise my opinion of you, were such a thing possible, the knowledge has lessened my evening's gratifications. As hostess you are impartial in your kindness."

Mr. Strong now presented himself, and to the delight of the awkward fellow was accepted.

"Mr. Jameston," said Jannette, "the time of your other dance engaged by proxy is at your disposal."

His face brightened with pleasure. "May I take you into supper? I will not then interrupt your pleasure of dancing."

"You are very considerate," she replied, smiling as she moved off with her partner.

CHAPTER XII

A WILLING CAPTIVE

THE morning after the party it was late before any of the inmates of Vernal-Dune made their appearance, and not until the dinner hour did the girls descend to the parlor, and then they were as fresh and merry as if they had lost no beauty sleep.

William Chasseur said to Jameston, "William, I was afraid you were having a dull time last night, your not dancing."

"My friend, give yourself no concern on my account. I assure you I never enjoyed myself more. I do not know a better substitute for dancing than to be granted a quiet talk with a graceful partner. Indeed, William, my entire stay here has been delightful. I can understand why Euripides should have prolonged his visit at the Court of Archelaus to the day of his death, and if you don't want history to repeat itself in the way of appreciated hospitality you had better change your tactics. I am in a silken web of pleasure and find the situation so enjoyable that I am afraid to move lest I break it and am set at liberty."

"You know," said William, "you have nothing in the world to make your going imperative."

"Besides," said Semloh, "you really must go with

my hunting party. We are going down to my place in a few days."

"How long will you be gone?" inquired Jameston.

"Until we tire of the sport."

"If I go home it may be some time before I can come again. If I go to Sampson, I can return in a short while. Gentlemen, I will go to Sampson!"

This was said with so much droll sincerity that everybody laughed and seemed pleased at his decision.

Jameston had his back to the door and did not see Colonel Chasseur, who entered in time to hear his remarks.

"That is right, Jameston; you are a guest after my own heart," he said cordially.

Henry Semloh was teasing Jannette by saying in an undertone, "I declare Uncle Theo has made a mistake. I say a guest after *his heart*! He should have said a *guest after Jannette's heart*. I must correct such a palpable error."

He made a move as though he would make the correction.

Jannette's efforts to prevent such a proceeding got them into such a cousinly romp that the rest of the company became interested. Jannette had seized a pair of bellows from the hearth and was giving him the benefit of an opposition current, which he evaded in such an active manner as to keep her busy in applying the air bath.

Mr. Jameston came up and, catching Semloh by the arms, said, laughing: "If you need assistance, Miss Jannette, I am at your service."

"That just goes to prove what I was going to tell you, Jameston."

Jannette, throwing down the bellows, ran from the room.

"You know it's the truth," Henry said, laughing. "That's why you can't face the music! Jameston, you are the only one I can tease her about." Laughing, as if he had the best of the joke, he replaced the bellows.

Jameston found any little incident that associated him with Jannette extremely pleasant.

When Jannette again made her appearance no vestige of the morning's embarrassment was visible. So perfectly innocent was her demeanor, that the clue to the joke would have been lost had not William Jameston been especially interested on that point. So at the first opportunity he said:

"Miss Jannette, I am curious to know the cause of your attack upon Semloh this morning."

There was the faintest rise of color and a flicker of a smile as Jannette replied:

"I thought that curiosity was one of woman's frailties."

"Perhaps that may have been some old cynic's opinion. I do not belong to that class of philosophers. If Cupid had perforated his heart, as he has mine, he would arrogate to himself sufficient

curiosity to look into every question bearing upon the case, and that with interest too."

"Well, really, Mr. Jameston, that seems a needless confession, for you have nothing to do with this case. It is entirely between Cousin Henry and myself."

Jameston smiled. "Are you quite sure? Semloh gave me to understand that I was in some way connected with it."

"That was only some of his nonsense."

"Why did you object to my knowing it?" he asked quizzically.

"Well, I know one dislikes to be made conspicuous, especially through a mistake. It was to shield you."

"I thought you said I had nothing to do with it," he remarked slyly.

"You had not truly. There is where the mistake comes in. Cousin Henry would make it appear that you had."

"I hope you will excuse my persistency, Miss Jannette, but really this matter grows more and more interesting. Suppose you state the case fully and let me decide what share I have in it, or let me call Semloh and settle the question."

"Oh, pray don't start Cousin Henry again," she exclaimed deprecatingly.

"I am afraid you are making light of a possible claim of mine, that I would be glad to have recognized."

Jannette smiled a little shyly, shaking her head, "I think not."

"Well, if you will not satisfy my curiosity, I have a clue."

"How much?" she asked, laughing.

"Semloh said he was teasing you about me." His clear blue eyes looking steadily into hers. "Miss Jannette, that I love you is no longer a secret. Have you not read it, too?"

This announcement, in a voice tremulous with emotion, was so sudden after the gay bantering previously engaged in, that Jannette's surprise was clearly manifested in the quick look of inquiry. Then with a consciousness of its full import, so earnestly spoken, a pretty glow warmed her fair face and the sweet blue eyes evaded his.

"Mr. Jameston, I am sorry if you have let Cousin Henry precipitate you into such an acknowledgment —" she said, with some hesitation.

"I assure you Cousin Henry has nothing to do with it. Your father will tell you, with his permission I have been impatiently waiting for an opportunity to speak of my love. We discussed your youth, your education. I asked only that I might make the confession that I love you, and seek your love in return, and have it understood that when I come again it will be as a suitor for your hand. You will have graduated then, and I will have decided upon my lifework. May I hope that during that time

you will think favorably of my aspirations? Can you give me any encouragement?"

"I am sure, Mr. Jameston, that we all think so highly of you we will be glad of your return at any time," she said evasively.

He smiled. "A half hour ago I would have been overjoyed to hear you say that, but now it does not satisfy me entirely. I am anxious to know the degree of my standing in your estimation — the amount of interest you will take in my return."

He was watching the deepening color, the soft light in the half-veiled eyes, the dimple scarcely seen before it was gone.

"Will you care especially to have me come?" he asked in winning manner, holding out his hand as if to make the answer easier for her.

Without further hesitation Jannette placed her hand in that of his.

He had time only for a gentle pressure, for approaching footsteps and merry tones reminded them that they were not the only occupants of the house.

CHAPTER XIII

A PILGRIMAGE TO A SHRINE

THE street known as Hillsboro, running west from the capitol, after passing the line of corporation, continued its route as a public road, with residences along the way on either side, more thickly stationed near the city, the distance apart being regulated by the dimensions of the owners' tracts. . The people occupying some of these villas were wealthy, in many instances their income accruing from plantations elsewhere.

Gentlemen when building their dwelling houses on their plantations generally considered the advantage or feasibility of being within convenient distance of others on adjacent places. Colonel Chasseur's dwelling was situated in a beautiful grove, refreshingly elevated and luxuriating in a picturesque, rocked spring. This fact, with perennial mosses and ferns had suggested its name, which the position and hospitality of the family fixed permanently through the passing of many generations.

This estate extended many miles along the road on both sides, and in a broad circle swept around and even crossed the south road miles from the city. It

consisted in vast low grounds of most productive soil, valuable water power, and great forests of timber. Yet the dwelling house was not far from the public road, and was in convenient distance both in relation to the neighboring houses and the city. A party of young people at any one point would often make a pedestrian trip through the forest to a neighbor's. Exploring the woods for nuts, berries, and some special floral specimen as a trophy of its season was sufficient inducement to start them, and when did youth ever fail to get its full worth out of every expedition? What are bruised toes, torn clothes, steep hills, or swift creeks, when young blood runs joyously, merry bright eyes sparkle, light dancing feet are sure, and lithe figures are borne involuntarily along on youth's buoyant wings?

It was just such a party that left the Academy Friday afternoon. Colonel Chasseur's carriage had carried home the larger girls with their companions, leaving Louise and Mary Shotwell at Mr. Boyden's, who in company with Kate and Ann Owen Camdon would shorten the way to Colonel Chasseur's by going through the woods.

The children thus left concluded to explore the way for bay flowers, and in that quest they almost unconsciously extended their range, and were soon skirting the public road. As usual Nancy, a negro girl, was sent with them as protector and guide. She told them of a tree growing on "old Mars Taylor's land" a "grandsire graybeard."

Those who are familiar with rural districts know this graceful tree, how its long sweeping boughs droop low with the beautiful effect of a weeping willow where each green leaf may be supposed to have bloomed into a frond of pure white.

Nancy said "old Mars Taylor's ain't but a leetle ways off, and de 'grancher graybeard' a leetle fudger on."

All agreed to take the trip, the way being shortened by Nancy's interesting antics and conversation. "Chillun, dare's a berrin grown nigh de tree; 'tain't like no berrin grown you all ebber see; hit's a vort grave."

Now as the children could form no idea of what a "vort grave" was, curiosity on that point added piquancy to the enterprise, so they tripped along with evident enjoyment of the walk.

It seems that Judge Taylor, being a Catholic, had selected a spot on his place, had had it consecrated, and a vault prepared. If it had ever been used at all, it must have served only as a temporary resting place for the dead, for as years passed on it showed signs of decay. With every wind the door creaked weirdly on its loosened hinges, the lichens and mosses of ages had crept in and around it, until it had somewhat the appearance of a huge grave that had been left open at one end for the convenience of its occupant, and had a grewsome air of inclosed and fostered emptiness — an earthly chrysalis from which

a spirit had but just emerged, and might still be hovering near.

As the party came in sight of the vault to them the atmosphere was filled with spooks.

Nancy was saying, "Dey do say old Mars Taylor wan't berried."

"Wan't buried!" echoed the children in chorus.

"No," continued Nancy, "'kaze he was drowned, and his ha'nt comes back ever wonst in er while ter see if ennybody is got his vort."

"Oh, do pray let's go back," whispered Mary. "He'll think we have come after it."

"Dar de old graybeard now," exclaimed Nancy, her staccato enunciation causing the children to scamper off toward the road with loud screams. Of course that was what Nancy wanted them to do, but she ran after them, hallooing to them to stop. "I don't know what in de name uf the Lord is ail yer-all; yer done walk er mile ter see er tree, and just kaze I say dar it 'tis, yer t'ar off like yer see de werry debil. Now, if you is guine wid me say so, and quit yer foolinish."

This asperity on Nancy's part caused a halt, and they finally retraced their steps slowly.

"Why, Nancy, we thought you meant it was the ha'nt coming to look for his vort." And they all laughed a shivery little laugh, for they were not over their scare. Just at that stage of nervous expectancy the rustle of a leaf, the flight of a bird,

the shadow of a cloud, shook their faith in Nancy's protection, and nothing short of wild flight could keep pace with their demoralized wits.

This little walk was fraught with wonder and interest worthy of a greater pilgrimage; it was accompanied by varied emotions, pleasurable from cultivated incredulity, and painful from inherited superstition. Now they were again in sight of the vault. The "Grandsire graybeard," with its drooping white leaves, was forgotten in the awe of the vault. A tangle of bamboo vines hung over it with stiff rustling leaves, and the trailing thorny tendrils growing near the ground had crept out through the long grass, so bare of leaves and wiry, as to appear a trap for some unwary foot traveler hurrying by the "burying ground."

If one of the children stumbled in keeping up with Nancy's long strides, the little outcry was immediately suppressed by Nancy's quickly spoken disapproval.

"Quit yer foolinish now! Quit yer foolinish, if youse guine wid me."

She had paused a minute to stimulate their fear and increase the awe attending their nearer approach; then said with a sigh, she intended for resignation, but which smacked more of satisfaction.

"Now we has cum dis fur we'll hav ter go closer and look at hit good."

"Yes," said Louise, "come on."

Mary said quite bravely, "I'm not afraid."

"Nor me, neither," joined in the others, too scared to be grammatical.

They finally reached the desolate spot. Nancy, like the rest of her race, was a firm believer in "ha'nts," and had a decided predilection for any hair-lifting or blood-curdling sights or sounds; any exaggeration that would cause excitement was freely indulged in. Nothing pleased her more than to see a crowd of children, white or black, scared out of their wits at something she had seen, heard, or suggested on her own responsibility. That she had no faith in these suggestions as far as tangible developments would work did not prevent her getting "skeered" too, if "skeer" was in the atmosphere; so now she was in her glory — the leader of this little band. Her age and strength and faithful attachment made her their staunch champion; she would do anything for their entertainment, and be equally entertained, or she would with equal enjoyment scare them to death and be just as "skeered" as anybody.

As they neared the vault each child had caught hold of a part of Nancy's cotton frock, and with round wide-opened eyes took a good look at the uncanny place.

"It ain't no more an' er cellar," said Nancy, with a depreciative snuffle. "We could have a vort at Master's if he wanted hit. 'Tain't like er berryin ground ter me, whar dey have er long black korps ter put in de grave hole, and then kiver hit up. I likes

de kiverin it up, so de ha'nt can't git out. Shew! dis ain't nigh as good as a berryin ground nohow; den dey allers sings solumkolly chunes."

Nancy had taken the initiatory in conversation and investigation. She was squatting down peering into the interior, and familiarity was wearing off, to some extent, the awe of the occasion. The little girls had released their hold on Nancy's dress, and each peeped in on tiptoe, and in silence. Nancy itching to increase the enjoyment of the grewsome situation, said banteringly:

"I bet yer all dassent sing a berrin' chune."

"I would if I knew one," said Kate Boyden.

"So would I," said Ann Owen. "Nancy, you sing one."

"I dunno air one nuther," said Nancy reflectively.

"I know this much," said Louise. "'Hark from the tomb the dreadful sound.'"

"Dat 'ill do; all j'ine in," said Nancy.

And each little rogue, with dimpling cheeks, commenced singing.

Nancy, like all of her race, had a quick ear for tune, but little for good English, so she sang with characteristic independence, and ludicrous solemnity—"Hark from de dome de darn consarn."

The song was interrupted by an unearthly sound, so sudden and terrific, that the very earth seemed to shake, and something enwrapt in white flew forth so swift in its motion that the arc described in its

passage from the vault magnified the dimensions of its shadowy form.

"My Lord, the vort is busted!" was yelled by Nancy as she jumped a yard high, knocking down two of the paralyzed girls.

In the confusion it was never known how they got away from the dreadful place. However, they went, and stood not upon the order of their going, "every one for himself, and devil take the hindermost," and, as good luck would have it, Nancy, who was the cause of their trouble, was the last. She veritably thought she was taken, for her frantic leap landed her into the thickest of the bamboo vine, and as fast as she got up she was tripped again; and before she could tear herself away from the briars and spooks the children had reached the open road where, minus bonnets, slippers, schoolbags, and otherwise demoralized, they sank down in a woeful heap to await further developments.

It seemed that Charles Launders, with his gun on his shoulder, had started to Vernal-Dune through the woods behind the vault. The children did not see him, and it was their scampering off before they reached the vault that apprised him of what was going on. There was something so comical about their appearance and conversation the jolly fellow entered into the spirit of it and waited to see how it would end. He thought they would be afraid to venture near the place, but when they not only be-

sieged the vault, but had the temerity to sing a dirge, his spirit of mischief got the upper hand of him, and no sooner had the last word of the line been droned out in a volume of lamentation than he lifted his gun and fired one barrel after another right over their heads. After seeing their fright, good fellow that he was, he would have gone in pursuit and restored their lost wits, had it been possible, but he could no more have followed them than he could have followed a flush of partridges; besides, the ludicrous affair from beginning to end was too much for the usual gallantry of Charles. His suppressed laughter ended in hilarious explosions so loud and so long that the frantic efforts of Nancy to get away were increased with every fresh outburst of merriment, until the thoroughly frightened negro fell prone to the earth beside the children screaming, "all Mars Taylor's dead folks is riz. I heard 'em er-shouting, 'case dey thought we had fotch 'em er nudder one of dey folks."

At this juncture and very opportunely Mrs. Chasseur and Sarah, returning from the city, came up to the disconsolate crowd. She dispatched the footman to collect the scattered property, and took the children home with her.

However much Nancy's superstition had deteriorated for the want of ocular demonstration prior to this event, it is needless to say that ever after her faith in "ha'nts" was so strong it went far to promote

growth of the superstition on the plantation, and those who had occasion to go near the vault dared not speak lest "the darned consarn" would fly out — which might have really happened, if after its flight the large white-breasted owl returned to its haunt.

CHAPTER XIV

INTEREST OF THE CABINS IN THE "GREAT-HOUSE"

"ALL de whings of the fol'in' table is strotch! Look out fer de kerrages of fine ladies, wid dey streamers a-flying and dey paralaxes histed! Look, mammy, dar dey come!"

"Ki, dar is a monstrous fine lot on 'em," said Mam Ailsey, coming to the door of the cabin and shading her aged eyes from the noonday sun.

"Yes, dey is a mighty fine lot, but none uv 'em can't git away wid Mars Theo's gals. Den jest look at Mars William; nun uv 'em comes a-sparking is up ter him."

"'Sep Ginel Daniel, mammy; he's highest uv 'em all."

"I ain't talking bout being jest high; it's carr'ing yerself wid manners like quality folks."

"Well, mammy, dat's 'zackly how Miss Sarah's young gentleman carries he-sef, and dey is fixin fer de wedden hand over hand dese days. Lisbon's guine wid 'em home, and, mammy, she's got more fine new fixins — like as she was a-goin ter git married too. She's even got a white Siss muslin coat, wid flowers all over hit what Mis Ada giv her."

“ ’Course she’s guine ter be fixed all right. Our white folks is quality, and all dey has is ekul to ennybody.”

She sat down on the doorstep and continued to eulogize her master’s family individually and collectively, though her audience, which was embodied in Susan, had run back to the “great house” to get a peep at what was going on.

Soon Uncle Tom came in, and his wife bustled around to give him dinner.

“Tom, they’s goin ter have the biggess sort ov times up at the great house.”

“They don’t have nothing else,” said Tom, swigging down a quart of milk and biting half moons out of a hoe cake. “De Lord prospers Mars Theo, an he scatters it all ober the country like de foremost and de hindmost rains. Ailsey, ain’t you got no pie nor ’lasses nor nothing?”

“Yes,” said Ailsey, with a gratified chuckle, “I’s allers got sumthin’, and most generally ’lasses; but I’s got pie ter-day,” and with a grin of pleasure she sat out a large liberal-looking pie. Its appearance indicated that it was not one of Miss Barbara’s donations from an overstocked pantry. The “great house” brand was not upon it, but what it lacked in daintiness it made up in quantity, and was one of Aunt Ailsey’s triumphs in culinary art, and it filled the bill for Uncle Tom’s appreciative capacity.

“Tell you, Ailsey, dat brackberry pie was good. I ain’t fitten for nothen now but to go ter sleep. I’ll

light my pipe and set out under de trees whar de flies won't bother me." Scratching about in the ashes with his forefinger, he resurrected a small coal of fire, which he picked up and dropped in his pipe, and sitting on a stool in the yard he leaned back against a tree and in a few minutes was nodding.

Ailsey, with her box of snuff and tooth brush, resumed her seat on the doorstep. This was a time of rest, and was from two to three hours, according to the early start in the cool of the morning and the dry heat of the day. The same restfulness was at the quarters. Many of the negroes spent it in making music on some kind of instrument, or in games, such as marbles, "mumble the peg," and quoits, while those industriously inclined wove baskets and mats. The women spun and wove for themselves. They were all well cared for, and what they did off hours and holidays was clear gain. Many of the men and boys had traps and snares for catching wild game. "Mars Theo's" table was a sure and well-paying market when they did not choose the delicacy for their own palate.

When the overseer's horn was blown, Uncle Tom got up and, after a long stretch, started off.

"Tom," asked Ailsey, "who in de name of de Lord is dat a-sidling along de fence?"

Tom stopped and looked in the direction indicated, with curiosity, as if a new species had wandered on the plantation.

"Bress God if I know, Ailsey."

In the meantime the object, an ill-conditioned negro, was approaching them.

"Is yer saw ennything uv er stray cow?" he asked.

"Nor," said Tom, "being as how I hain't been nowheres ter look fer none. Who's air rit?"

"Billy Craw's. He got me ter hunt her fer him."

"Does yer b'long ter him?"

"Nor."

"Well who does you b'long to?"

Freedom was not looked upon as a badge of honor. The negro was not inclined to mention what would separate him as a class from his fellows, so the last question was answered in a manner somewhat explanatory or deprecatory.

"Who? Me?" he asked, as if to gain time for the right answer. "My ole marster sot my mammy free fore I was born."

"Er-her!" said Ailsey, in a tone and manner expressive of an elucidation of all that had or could befall the freedman. "And yer daddy and mammy, how does dey git erlong?"

"Dey works erbout when dey gits it ter do."

"My Lord! what dey do when dey's outen work?"

"Dey scuffles erlong, en de whi' folks he'ps 'em."

"Well, I lay you's hongry yersef this minit, er trottin' arter a cow from one ean' uv town to t'other. Set down on Tom's stool whilst I fetch yer some vittals."

Nothing loath, the negro availed himself of Ail-

sey's invitation, and after greedily emptying the plate he said:

"I'm mightily erbleege ter yer," and resumed his search for the cow along the public road.

Ailsey watched him until out of sight, and then said, with mingled contempt and commiseration:

"I 'clare 'fore God I'd hate to be such er poor onery cuss!"

"Who is yer talking erbout, Ailsey?"

Ailsey turned. "Is dat you, Judy? Didn't yer see him?"

"Nor; I hain't see nothing on God's yearth but you."

"Well, Judy, hit was er poor free nigger!"

It may be observed here that the word "nigger" did not originate with the white people, nor was it intended as an epithet of contempt, as some may think. The word arose from the negroes' slack or indifferent way of pronouncing the name of their own race. Their pronunciation was very defective, much more so than their intelligence warranted. They were a happy-go-lucky people, and to remote generations retained gestures and certain expressive sounds and enunciations inherent in the native African, and people who are unfamiliar with them can form no correct idea of their peculiarities through a written interpretation any more than the inspection of the characters on a tea box would give you an idea of the Chinese language. Sound is not transmitted by characters. Now these two negro women were a

study as they discussed that "poor onery free nigger."

"And hain't got nobody ter look out fer him, poor critter! Ailsey, gimme er dip o' snuff. I pay yer back ter-morrow. And yer say his folks is free, too?"

"Yes, Lord! and working erbout wid poor white folks!"

"Er-her! Dey ain't got nothing deyselves, how dey gwine ter help poor lazy niggers?"

"Dat's hit now, Judy, dey don't; and hongry! Shoo, he et like er hound!"

"Mammy!"

"Good God A'mighty! Dick, how yer skeered me! You come creeping up pun me dat way ag'in, I bust yer head open—I 'clare 'fore God I will."

Dick was so used to such dire threats they caused no alarm.

"Mammy, I'se hongry."

"Hongry! Where's all that dinner yer et? I'd scorn to be as holler as a free nigger."

Dick was making way to his mammy's cabin when she called after him, "Don't yer dare tetch nothin' in dat cubbard tell I come."

"Well, come on den, mammy. I'se in a hurry. I'se got ter carry sumpen to de gret hus."

Interest in the great house rather than Dick's appetite caused her to follow him at once.

"What yur got ter do to the gret hus?"

"Fiddle-strings," he said, without further explanation, diving into his plate of cold food.

"You dun been ter town?"

"Yes, 'em."

"What else yer got?"

"Nothin'."

"But I knows yer is, wid yer pockets 'bout to bust. Don't you lie ter me, boy. I break yer head fer you es quick as I look at you."

"I just spent my money what Mars Jim'son give me."

"How much wus hit?"

"Quarter dollar."

"An' you done gone an' spent er whole quarter!"

"Mammy, yer talk like I could vide up er quarter 'twixt us."

"You don't never think of yer pore ole mammy," she said, aggrieved at his extravagance in laying out so large a sum on himself.

"Yes, I do, mammy! I'se gwine ter play de jew's-harp fer yer." Shoving the plate on a convenient bench, he went up toward the house. Instead of going in, he went around to a well-shaded part of the grove and, throwing himself down under a tree, he drew from his pocket a fiddle-string, a jew's-harp, and a mouth organ. After examining the string critically, he thrust it back into his pocket, then tried the jew's-harp, but upon the mouth organ he dwelt with delight, trying as many tunes as he could whistle, and with as many changes as a mock-

ing bird. He fairly reveled in melody. It was toward evening before his concert was interrupted. As he went back across the yard he met Aunt Judy, who was on her way to the kitchen.

He asked her, "What is er free nigger, mammy?"

"Hit's pore black folks that hain't got no white folks. Dey jest goes round working fer pore white trash, 'kaze quality folk haves they own black folks and won't have 'em. I lay you seed him on de road."

"Did he look like daddy's ole coat whar he stuffed ter skeer crows?"

"Bress God, he looked nigher like de ole coat fore 'twas stuffed."

"I seed him. Ole Bet like ter fro me shying at 'im. Master's good, how come he didn't ax him ter have 'im?"

"Mars Theo don't want no sorrier nigger dan you. One on de plantation is ernuff, de Lord knows. Go long fetch dem cows, wid yer head an yer back full er dirt, and yer pockets full er jew's-harps."

Dick received this as good-natured wit, which it was intended for, and bounding over the fence by the side of the gate he was soon out of sight, but not out of hearing, for he forthwith adjusted his movements to suit the business uppermost in his mind, and gave the passing breezes full time to waft back many impromptu variations from his highly prized harmonica.

CHAPTER XV,

SOUTHERN COURTSHIP

THE mode of Southern courtship has advantages peculiarly its own. It is the natural outcome of the law of selection. *Paterfamilias'* friendly plotting is not worth a cent if it works contrary to this law. It is indeed such an evolutionary process that the end is not reached or the conclusion arrived at until the thing is perfected.

A young man may meet a young lady, and through her be introduced into her family, but that does not necessarily constitute him her property by the law of discovery. The other members of the family do not label him her beau and shun him on all occasions, to give him a chance. He simply becomes another visitor, and has one chance in five, ten, twenty, or more according to the popularity of the girl and the number of visitors.

A Southern girl knows nothing about "keeping company" with one young man until, heartily tired of each other, they have a compromise between a marriage, or "breach of promise suit" of liberty.

What can be safer or more pleasant than being often in a company of friends, where one or more

couples are conscious of special pleasure in the glance of an eye, the tone of voice with its soft Southern accent, the charming smile with no special meaning where the heart does not interpret; where the gay spirits are presided over by Cupid, who tips many little shafts just enough to call attention to the shot? If the challenge is accepted then come many little encounters, until affairs run into a hand-to-hand engagement, such as delightful little *tête-à-têtes*, walks, drives, and as each young gentleman has his turn, individually and collectively to make himself agreeable, the young lady has the opportunity to make a choice between them.

There are often cases of love at first sight, but the courtship is about the same. The girl has to be won; she does not wear her heart on her sleeve or tie any lovers' knots upon unwilling hands. They must of themselves get fast entangled through very helplessness and ignorance of the silken web, with a mesmeric delight in the lover's maze that makes him wary lest the least want of gentleness or tact breaks the net and he be set at liberty.

Is not this coquetry?

Well, perhaps this is the true meaning of coquetry.

It is to the sacred depths of a maiden's heart what the gently unfolding calyx is to the opening bud. Suppose no graceful tender little leaves enfolded the rosebud. In the working of a perverted law would be produced buds shorn of that delicate texture and coloring which is now a rose's natural characteristic

with such a protection. So it is a Southern girl's prerogative to inclose her heart in those delicate little shields of coquetry, until sometime the warmth of love gradually lowers the little shields and the purity and delicacy of the opening flower be perfected.

Mr. Robert McKinnon had been visiting Vernal-Dune for more than a year, and after his engagement to Sarah he sued with a lover's impatience for their marriage.

A wedding at this era was pretty much on the order of a wedding of to-day. If the time was auspicious and the alliance agreeable the ceremony was in the way of elegance and brilliance in keeping with the wealth and position of the family.

The extent of its liberality and spirit of festivity being somewhat more pronounced, it reached every cabin on the plantation, where, excepting the cooking department, the interest in work lessened daily, and upon the day of the wedding it came to a halt.

In the house everything came within reach of the current of vital interest. The rooms best adapted by size and location were divested of incongruous furniture and made ready for the active scenes of the festivities, while the sleeping apartments and accommodations were condensed as far as possible, sometimes six beds in one room. Once a gallant gentleman, seeking an outlet for a quiet smoke in a piazza, was seen to make hasty retreat with profuse apologies, to a pile of beds, stored there to make room for the great number of guests.

The floor of the parlor had been waxed as "slick as glass," Ransom said, after he and Burwell had polished it with the long-handled brush, upon which one of the children thought it rare sport to ride, the additional weight decreasing the muscular pressure necessary for the proper degree of friction, and was no more effort to the sturdy arms than drawing a child's sled.

Then in addition to the usual candles and lamps, strips of wood for holding candles two or three inches apart were placed over doorways and mantel-pieces, each entwined with garlands of evergreens and flowers, making a very artistic illumination.

Handsomely printed invitations had been sent out, and the most skillful confectioner had been given orders, without being limited in regard to his most expensive possibilities.

Miss Barbara and her assistants had literally spread themselves in great preparations, from "great house" pantries and cellars, to dairy and kitchen.

There was a time when a later generation critically examined the antique garments of their ancestors, the narrow short skirt, the shorter waist, the odd trimming. The queer material was a very kindergarten of interest and investigation, but upon the basis of truth, "That which hath been is now, and that which is to be hath already been," we of to-day have just graduated in that form, and being familiar with the subject no longer see anything curious or grotesque in much that was once termed "old style." The

æsthetic beauty of the Empire gown as worn to-day made our grandmamas equally lovely long ago.

When I say Sarah made a lovely bride, robed in white satin, fine old lace, and jewels, you may imagine as dainty a bride as you have seen this season. Perhaps the last seen was a copy of that of long ago.

The picturesqueness lent the occasion by the elaborate ruffles of our forefathers was much more æsthetically effective than any dress suit of later days.

A platform was raised for the accommodation of a skillful band of musicians, for dancing at a wedding was not the least honor of the occasion. When the wedding was an especially brilliant event it was a gratification to be one of the guests; but it was something in after years to be able to say, "I danced at the wedding." It was an evidence of having taken an active part in the brilliant exercises, and showed there was some foundation for the impression that they had been on a friendly footing with the family.

Colonel Chasseur was in the prime of life, handsome and genial. The full dress suit of that era may have made some difference in the grace of dignity then and now. I imagine the difference of a bow from a curled and powdered head poised above fine frills and delicately colored costumes of that era, and now, with the close-cropped head and neck splintered, as it were, by the stiffest of stiff linen, a liberal breadth of shirt front, suggestive of a laundry sign, and the entire figure incased in somber hues.

The old style gave an airy grace of manner in sharp contrast to that of the present day.

Mrs. Chasseur, in a shimmering satin of light silver-gray, a color she was partial to, was as lovely as her daughters, with a sweet refined beauty, like the blush roses she wore on her breast, and as Louise said, "they just matched her pretty cheeks."

The negroes had all donned their best clothes, and ate "good things" from the "Gret Hus," and if all did not see the wedding, many did, and the dusky faces that peeped over each other's shoulders in the desire to see the bridal party get into the waiting carriages wore expressions on their healthy faces of peace and happiness that has never been, and will never be, seen around the ballot box. The display of white teeth, the jocular laugh, as the slippers sailed over their heads and a shower of rice followed the bride and groom amid some hearty tones of "God bress you, Miss Sarah, and young Marser, God bress you bofe."

CHAPTER XVI

SOUTHERN SOCIETY NOW — THEN

I AM aware that some years before the late Ward McAllister revised the New York social list, that to overhaul social institutions South, was agitated north of the Mason and Dixon line. An attempt was made to file a new scale of gradation, but it is not wise for inexperienced fingers to meddle with intricate machinery. Through the great upheaval of a revolution the entire thing was pitched out of gear, and instead of a sound healthy organization, *dissecta membra* litters the way.

It is like a broken kaleidoscope, with its colors scattered. As a whole it was a pleasant sight, its varied symmetrical form, its bright coloring, with distinctive lines of demarkation. Blue-blooded aristocracy, red-blooded plebeians, yellow gold, luxuriant green fields, the delicate white race, the hardy black,—each form, each color intact; but the ties which bound the ingenious arrangement together broken, the pieces separated, never again can the same unity and harmony exist.

In the beginning of the nineteenth century, this organization was exclusively sustained by the better

class. They had nothing to do but enjoy life, and they did it with worthy enthusiasm. As I have stated before, it was not so much false pride that separated the classes as a general and accepted fitness of things, for there were instances where persons of attractive natural qualities and exceptional character often mingled unquestioned in the most fashionable society. Some bright boy or girl would form friendships among their classmates, and they were not countenanced only, but patronized where they were sufficiently refined and intelligent not to overdo the thing in their effort to advance. This was only a graceful recognition of worth on the part of society people, for the less fortunate class were never "at home." Perhaps their occupations were not those of a gentleman "to the manner born." They knew nothing of the manner and cared less. There were lines, not so much conventional as incongruous to the patrician instinct, over which society people never went themselves, but graciously permitted the other class a margin, where they had the worthy ambition to improve their condition.

Occasionally a girl would attach herself to a party of schoolgirls going out to Colonel Chasseur's, Mr. Boyden's, or Judge Camdon's, who knew the visit would not be returned. Perhaps she was the only one of her family who would have taken such a liberty.

Louise Chasseur was a kind-hearted child and, always having plenty of pocket change, could gratify

her natural generosity to any extent, and she never let Turner Rivers pass her without patronizing his wheelbarrow of ice cream and fruits. She had the double pleasure of helping Turner get rid of his wares and also treating the girls. Turner was a good bright boy, always clean and neatly dressed, and so polite that from the time of his connection with the confectioner he was very popular and found no difficulty in disposing of his wares.

Susan Grafton, Mary Shotwell, and Louise were on their way to the Academy when Louise, catching sight of Turner, said:

"Come on, girls! I've got a quarter left, and I am going to let Turner have it."

"Good evening, Turner," they said, overtaking the youth.

"Good evening, ladies," stopping his wheelbarrow and lifting his hat. "I have just sold out the cream, and have only oranges left."

"Well," said Louise, "we'll take a quarter's worth of oranges."

The three girls had seated themselves on the handles of the wheelbarrow, while the vender counted out the oranges. He had halted under a tree, and the cool shade was in pleasant contrast to the heat of the sunny and hurried walk.

"Are you in a hurry, Turner?" asked Louise, as she divided the oranges.

"No; I have to wait when my patrons eat the cream, so I don't mind resting a little."

"You keep that one, Turner," said Louise.

"No, thank you," said he, blushing. "I mustn't sell things and then help eat them."

"But this is my treat, and not like if the things were yours."

He had placed the orange on her schoolbag.

"Now we won't like it at all if you don't eat that one," and Louise thrust it back at him.

"Are you kin to the man you stay with?" asked Susan.

"No, I am all to myself; that's why I have to work instead of going to school."

"Had you rather go to school?"

"Yes, marm," he said emphatically, leaning against the tree while he sucked the juice from the orange. "But," he brightly added, "it won't always be so. I study at night, and after a while I'll make money enough to go to school. It bothers me now about getting books."

"Well," said Louise, "we have got lots of books at home nobody wants; I'll bring you some. Besides, I'll thank you very kindly to take some of these," laughing, while she emptied her bag.

"Oh, no!" he said confusedly, "I can't do that."

"But you can, though, for I have got Sister Jannette's, that she is done with."

All of the little girls were looking over the contents of their bag.

"Gracious knows I will be glad to get rid of some

of mine," said Susan; "but maybe these are not high enough for you."

"Yes, they are; but if my mother had lived I would know more than I do."

"Where is your father?"

"My father is dead. I do not remember him; but my mother,"—he said this with a gentleness that was really pathetic,—"I will never get over missing her." He pulled his hat over his eyes.

Louise put her grammar on the wheelbarrow, Susan her history, and Mary her dictionary, and unheeding his earnest protest ran off.

Susan said, "I like Turner Rivers."

"I think he is real nice," said Louise.

Mary said, "Yes, he ought not to be doing that kind of work."

"But," said the practical Louise, "it is better than — than —"

"Better than what?" asked Mary, laughing.

"I don't know," said Louise, in some doubt but that it was about as bad as anything. "He hasn't anybody to take care of him, you know."

"I think," said Susan, "that it shows he is a smart, clever boy to take care of himself like a grown man."

"Whom are you talking about?" asked Matilda Rasier, overtaking them.

"Turner Rivers."

"Got mighty little to talk about. He is as poor

as a church mouse, and has to earn his own living," she said, turning up her nose.

"I shouldn't think you would say anything against anybody earning his own living, Tildy," said plain-spoken Louise, with a significant glance at Susan.

"Humph! You talk like I had to work. My pa has got plenty money."

"How did he get it?" asked Mary slyly.

"Get it? Why, I don't know. How did yours get his?"

"Oh, papa *never got any*; it has always been in the family like Uncle Theo's," said Mary, laughing.

"Well, that's nothing to be so stuck up about! Just so anybody has got money, that's enough."

"I don't know so much about it's being enough," said Mary, "but I guess it is better than nothing."

"Well, you seem to think so much of Turner Rivers, what has he got, pray?"

"Ice cream and oranges!" laughed Louise, mimicking Turner, at which all laughed good-humoredly.

"Turner Rivers is a nice, smart boy. Charlie Lauanders says so," said Louise.

"And who is Charlie Lauanders?"

"He is a boy who doesn't have to work for his living. Don't you want to know him?" asked Mary teasingly.

"Well, you can make much of Turner Rivers and his wheelbarrow to your heart's content for all I care," said Matilda, tossing her head.

"We are going to," said Louise, "and when I have my birthday party I am going to invite him."

"I wish you would," said Susan.

They had reached the grove, and the ringing of the bell showed them that Miss Benedict had got there before them.

CHAPTER XVII

LISTENING TO A DIVINE CALL

MR. JAMESTON came down to the wedding. As the festivities had given him little opportunity for uninterrupted conversation with Jannette, he very willingly yielded to the pressing invitation of William to remain as one of a few select friends to help tide them over the loneliness caused by Sarah's departure. And pleasant indeed was the reunion after eight or ten months' separation. Jannette had reached the second term of her senior year, and the divine drawing of the Holy Spirit had decided William's lifework. The love of the Master had lighted the clear, honest eyes with a soft radiant beauty that shone with interest for all mankind. And to a naturally, low, sweet voice and gentle manner was added oratorical force of expression that was in after years to touch the hearts of sinners and lead them into the ways of righteousness and paths of peace.

In previous conversations with Jannette he had talked of his future — the solemnity of a decision respecting a ministerial call. In his case all honorable avenues were open to him through his own worth and that of a wealthy, influential family.

"The distrusts of one's own heart, hesitating be-

fore so pure a shrine! Now," said he, "I can hesitate no longer. I can myself at least kneel at the shrine to which I may lead others. I think of your precious life united to mine. It is not a selfish love. I do not take you from your home of opulence. Darling, I could not ask you to share the precarious fortunes of a poor itinerant preacher, but the inheritance that I have thought of little heretofore is now a source of comfort and pleasure. I shall require no sacrifice of you that follows in the wake of poverty, knowing that you approve of and are in sympathy with my decision. I have only one regret to mar an otherwise happy state of mind. As you know, I am an only child. We have always been the best of comrades, my kind, indulgent father and I, and he has set his heart upon my being a lawyer and politician, if I choose any settled occupation. This divine call has had to pass a strong veto in the opposition of my father before reaching me. The fact of my being able to hear it above *that* is another assurance of its divine origin."

"That is a great test," said Jannette. "I can't think of a more severe one. After relying upon your father since your childhood, being guided and directed by him in every step of importance, thus seeming to take matters into your own hands and ignoring his wishes must be a heavy trial."

"It is indeed." And more than a shade of trouble touched the face and tone of this young student of theology.

"But," added Jannette brightly, "you would not be so sure of the call if everything pushed you right into place, and as there was a way provided without the sacrifice of Isaac, so will there be a happy way out of this difficulty."

"Sweet little prophetess," he said, his face clearing. "As long as I have you I cannot be overwhelmed."

He took from his pocket a little box, which when opened, disclosed a fine diamond ring.

"This was the engagement ring of my mother, there is a sacredness about it that no other ring could have. This is not to be your engagement ring," he said, smiling, as he took her hand, "but a proof of how near and dear you are to me. Whenever you think of it, let it say to you, 'he loves me so truly and tenderly, and feels so sure that his sainted mother would approve his choice, that he wants something like a tangible unity of spirit.'"

He put the ring on her finger and kissed her hand with the gentle fervor that left no doubt of his devotion.

"Oh, Mr. Jameston! you don't know how this proof of your love has touched my heart. There is a sacredness about it above even an engagement, that might sometimes be entered into lightly; but this ring of your dear mother as a seal of approval — never! I almost feel the touch of her hand."

"And I feel the peace of her presence. I may be an awkward wooer, for I have had little practice;

but, darling, there is no lack of love and earnestness in my heart, and as my mother was my first interpreter, and as I grew up understood every phase of my temperament and cheered and stimulated me through her confidence and sympathy, so her ring beyond the power of a sovereign's signet of law seals that of love in united hearts."

Here their attention was attracted by the sound of galloping horses, and Ada and Dr. Hyman came in sight.

"What a graceful rider your sister is."

"Yes," said Jannette, "Sister Ada is as straight as an Indian and sits her horse well. How beautiful she is!"

She returned Doctor Hyman's gay salute, from the window.

"Judging from appearances there will be another wedding. I can imagine the end to such marked attention, though you young ladies are so popular it will keep any fellow on his mettle to come out ahead," he said, laughing happily.

The lively young doctor joined them, and after Ada had exchanged her riding habit for a dress of some airy material, she made her appearance. The heightened color in her cheeks might have been credited to the equestrian exercise solely, had not the unusual gayety of the young doctor suggested to other minds the true state of his. It was evident that the ride had been a success. Had it not been there would

have been traces of it in the doctor, whose face and manner was always a true index to his state of feeling. He was the only son of the Secretary of State, intelligent, well educated, and skillful as a physician, and with the best social connections. These gave him, without a struggle, an enviable place among professional men of the day. He was kind-hearted and charitable, but very strong in his prejudices; if he liked a person he was a jovial and witty companion, but toward those he did not like his pride ran into haughtiness that was repellent. His kindness to his patients, whatever their condition or position in life, had built up for him a fine practice, and had won for him many devoted friends among all classes. So it seemed but natural that the brilliant Ada should have attracted the young and popular doctor, and that his ardent wooing should meet with success.

During his courtship the doctor was placed in a very embarrassing if not irritating situation, by riding a fiery young horse. He was a fine rider, sitting his horse as if he was a part of him, and never riding any but such as required the nerve of a fearless rider to curb. On this occasion when he reached Vernal-Dune a very heavy rain was falling. The young horse, not liking the thunder, reared and plunged so as to displace the doctor's fine silk beaver. No spur or whip could induce the horse to go near the raised umbrella that had been sent out to shelter the doctor to the house, and before the doctor could

dismount he was not only quite wet, but his upturned beaver, notwithstanding its aristocratic pretensions, was catching rain like any ordinary tub!

This incident and one other contretemps were standing jokes he told on himself, when the discomfiture had wasted itself in good-natured laughter.

There was an entertainment in honor of some public event, and Hyman, who was very fond of his little sister, told her he could not romp with her then, as he was going to a party. As party suggested cake to the child, she asked him to bring her a piece, and he readily promised he would. The affair proved very enjoyable, and little Louisa's request was not thought of until at the banquet table. Wanting to humor the little girl, a small iced cake was folded in his handkerchief and put in his pocket, to be forgotten the minute afterward. During the evening when he was the gayest dancer on the floor and the greatest gallant generally, and in the presence of the most noted belles of the occasion, in a graceful flourish of grandiloquence the snowy handkerchief was quickly withdrawn, tossing the cake with most embarrassing emphasis into the midst of the party. Imagine the inferences!

CHAPTER XVIII

WILLIAM JAMESTON AT HOME

THE scene upon which this chapter is based is in our neighboring State, Virginia. The dimensions of a dwelling house just in sight of a traveling carriage, entitled it to the name of mansion. It is commodious and massive, with great stone pillars supporting a covered vestibule, that reached to the two story roof. The floor of this entry was inlaid with white and gray octagon stones. The house stood on a slight elevation. The well-turfed lawn sloped down to the iron fence, where a large gate on either side of the house furnished an entrance and outlet to a broad and gravel-coated carriageway that curved in graceful well-kept borders up to the mansion. To this gateway one bright morning a splendid carriage approached. The conveyance stopped, the footman leaped to the ground and opening the door unfolded the several steps, and William Jameston descended from the stately coach. A gray-headed mulatto, with pompous air, but kindly face, had swung open the hall doors.

“Glad you’ve got back, Mars William. Old house so empty when you’re gone it sounds right holler.”

“Thank you, Uncle Eben. I am glad to get back home. I suppose I will find father in the library. All of you are well, I hope.” He ran up the steps like a light-hearted boy, while the men removed trunk and valise.

“Glad to see you, my son,” said the elder Jameston, embracing William.

The father of William Jameston was a noble-looking man, and although past the prime of life still retained a grand manliness and the courtly elegance of gentlemen of his day. Tall and straight, with punctilious nicety in every detail of his toilet, the poise of the grand head, the carriage, every movement, bespoke not only the gentleman, but one whose ancestry had drawn a severe line in all associations. Members of his club adored his brilliant mind, coveted his patronage, but were never familiar. Since the death of William’s mother the one thing left to fill his heart was William. He was proud of his handsome, intelligent boy. His career up to the present time had met with his father’s approval. Everything that William said or did, from his boyhood up, from its ingenuous gracefulness had a charm for the fastidious man. The unswerving laws of heredity, as exemplified in the young man were noted, by the elder, with increasing pleasure, and he traced in his son his own high sense of honor, and the intelligent comprehension and strength of character that fulfilled all its demands. The embryo virtues and accomplishments of the aristocrat were all

embodied in the boy. Yet there was a psychological difference between sire and son, that was yet to puzzle the now confident father. The life current that had run through Lee Jameston's entire life was pride. While William's motive power was innate purity and goodness, and his father recognized the nobility of the youth, yet most he admired the son's generosity, and almost worshiped the sweet gentleness and the conscientiousness that recalled the Christian virtues of his beautiful wife. That his boy was always doing good and saying remarkable things to learned men and routing their false arguments without seeming effort, pleased him; he even thought it a good joke when William denounced many of the fashionable follies of the day. He was glad that the boy had not taken to gambling and horse-racing. He had himself been too proud for such sports and too refined for such associations. It made no difference to him if William did not choose a profession. Why should William be bothered about anything but looking after the estate? The father did not care whether his son married or not. William could suit himself about the time, and he felt no misgivings as to his choice. The companionship of his son was very enjoyable, and this first evening at home after a month or so of traveling furnished an agreeable exchange of current news.

"You know, father, I told you a year ago about a pretty little girl in North Carolina who had captured my heart."

"Humph!" said the elder. "I suppose you fall a prey to another at this last visit; but you have an inherited right to be fastidious. You have plenty of time before you, too."

"You are right, I am fastidious. You know I never fell a prey to anything; but I made a bold attack this time, after a siege of nearly two years, and won."

This was said in a manly, straightforward way.

"Well, let's have the particulars. Patrician lineage, beautiful, cultured, rich?"

"I don't know about the finances."

"You don't! Eh, Gad! I think you had better make a note of that item for your next visit."

"Colonel Chasseur lives like a prince. You have seen William."

"Yes; fine young man."

"Well, the entire family are exceptional in every respect. The ladies are gentle and lovely. There are no lack of means, for it takes a fortune to live as they do; it is a continual feast, an uninterrupted round of pleasures. A happier or more indulged household I never saw; but as to a dowry, I never even thought of it in connection with his daughter; and my lady-love—when you see her you will understand that a dowry is a small matter. Indeed, it is not to be thought of in connection with such a jewel."

"Humph! It seems to me that some time during the course of my life I have heard something similar

to your last remark," his father replied, with dry emphasis.

"Well, father," said William, coloring, "suppose you wanted a certain gem, and found one flawless, would the matter of the case or setting deter your getting possession, particularly if you could afford to reset it as you pleased?"

"Eh, Gad! I suppose you have already made your settlement?" in the tone of cool inquiry.

"Colonel Chasseur has not given me an opportunity. Miss Jannette does not graduate till next June, and I wanted to study some myself during that interval."

"Study, eh? By Jove, William! I suggest it be finances," he replied good-humoredly.

"No, sir; I must study theology," replied William gravely.

The elder rose quickly, his countenance changing suddenly, as if stricken with pain. "Not to-night, William. I had hoped this love business would give you occupation enough for the present."

"Father, out of respect and affection for you I have put the settlement of this question off from time to time. Listen to me now."

There was so much pathetic entreaty in William's tone and manner that his father now paused with his hand on the door-knob.

"William, I have no objection to your studying the Bible, but can't you employ your spare time in doing such charity as you may choose, and living a blame-

less life, without being one of those common, ranting, itinerant jockeys scouring the country — a dirty thriftless set of adventurers, prating of things they know nothing about, and making their living on collections? ”

“ But, father, I don’t purpose to be anything as objectionable as you picture ; besides, your prejudice makes you unjust to that class of man. If you knew some of them you could but admire their self-sacrificing lives. Their zeal knows no discouragement — they bear patiently the sneers and persecutions of the people.”

“ That’s it, now,” said the father, resuming his chair. “ Cowards and sneaks ! Who is called upon to bear persecutions in this era of enlightenment ? A gentleman will not be attacking everybody and publicly denouncing them as vile wretches, because they are not one of those weak, emotional creatures, falling into trances, seeing visions, and shouting everybody deaf in their meeting-houses. If it is necessary for this kind of thing to be carried on among the ignorant, common people, let them enjoy the thing among themselves ; but it is no fit occupation for a gentleman. No, William, I would rather follow you to your grave than have you ranting at one of their meeting-houses.”

“ But, father, if the common, ignorant people have souls, they need someone to teach them who is not ignorant. I would regret to do anything offensive

to you, but if I conscientiously believe I must work to save souls —”

“There it is again! Save souls! In the name of the devil, how can you save souls? I thought that event was the outcome of the Crucifixion.”

“So it is, father; but the Bible says, ‘How, then, shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher?’”

“Oh, William, I had such hopes, bright hopes for your future — the perpetuation of my grand old name — and now in my declining years, to have you tell me that your ambition reaches no higher than to trot all over the country in soiled linen and unkempt person to harangue the ignorant, superstitious, and ill-bred masses at barns, smithies, and meeting-houses! Oh, William, my son, that I should live to see this day! It is worse than politics, for that does lead to honest preferment; *that*, you do not need, but your intellect and wit would score high in congressional debates. Oh, William, don’t disgrace your good old name! Examine anew the portraits of the grand men and lovely women hanging in our halls — do they look like a set of common emigrants? or that in Puritan or Pilgrim herds they navigated to this country, to be told they were miserable sinners, or came as missionaries to the savages! By George! your grandfather just escaped earldom by

two brothers, and if he had been satisfied with his royal living and noble associates you would never have thought of John Wesley, or any other fanatic, but you would have been in Parliament to-day; but his conscience reached out to the oppressed Americans and nothing would satisfy him but throwing up his liberty cup in a free country. I inherited the English temperament of my forefathers. I was born an aristocrat. I will furnish the money to assist in any needed reform, but I'll be hanged if I get down to personal inspection of the sewers or embrace with brotherly love masses of the Smendi! Ough!" And the aristocrat fairly shivered.

What could William say? Every time he essayed to speak there was with increased irritation, a fresh outburst from his father.

"But, father—" began William, with respectful haste.

"Oh, yes, I know before you say it, that the republicanism of your grandfather has by one of the heredity leaps passed over me to you, and now you want to throw up your hat and hurrah for John Wesley and his followers. Free people 'Free religion' by Jove! William, I'd rather you would take orders, and coupee around gold candelabra haranguing congregations in Latin, so as not to be understood, than to make a fool of yourself by talking of things in English that you don't understand — see, William?"

"But with God's help I will understand," said William earnestly.

"By George, if praying will bring you to your senses, I'll take a hand myself! Why, if you had lived a little earlier, you would have been hand and glove with that superstitious old bloodhound Cotton Mather — psalm singing and witch burning."

"Father, it is the better enlightenment that has expunged those cruelties and many Puritan absurdities from the Christian religion. If it had been left, as you suggested, to the ignorant, common people civilization would have made but little advancement. The sinner, though ignorant and superstitious, was conscious that a devil existed; but not in themselves; they located him in somebody else, hence went about exterminating him. When better and wiser men came to the rescue and taught them that each individual had his own devil —"

"Yes," interrupted the senior, "and there is the origin of hypocrisy; every sinner turned his attention to hiding his devil to escape cremation. Such is human nature."

"In the meantime," said William, "what a glorious opportunity this crisis offers to a conscientious Christian to help these poor hypocrits to get rid of their devil; to lead them in the footsteps of the gentle Christ. As his disciple to speak His words to those who cannot or will not read them. He cast out devils. If I cannot do so great a work, I may at least lead them to Him."

"William," interrupted his father, "let's come to an understanding now once for all. You know I have never crossed you in anything. Indeed, to do you justice, I should say that heretofore there has been no move on your part to justify it. However, you have now reached an important era in your life—the selection of a wife and what you term your life-work. The first concerns you directly; the last concerns me and all my long line of ancestry. The father of each generation is expected to raise his son a gentleman, and pass only gentlemen down the line. We as gentlemen born have had no need for political preferment or professional honors. Our intellect and accomplishments have shone among our brilliant peers, our wealth has been scattered for good with liberality. Eh, Gad! to think I have built two meeting-houses myself! Our influence has generously aided the less fortunate. Now I know of the Chasseur family. I am perfectly willing that you should marry the young lady, I would be glad to have the old home lighted up again by the presence of a beautiful woman. To have you settled would be a gratification. You will have ample means for establishing your name as a great philanthropist. I will not deter you from any wise move in that way, but if you persist in this nonsense, and choose to be a circuit rider dragging your family from one end of the country to the other, putting yourself soul and body under the control of a bigoted, domineering, narrow-minded set of ignoramuses, be-

ing a party to those who live on hat collections, I'll be damned if I don't disinherit you!"

The old gentleman got hotter and hotter as he proceeded, and at the last sentence he emphasized his earnestness by a blow on the table with his fist that made the wax candles in the candelabrum flicker like summer lightning, and, rising hastily to prevent William speaking, he retired, but with his usual courtly "Good night, my son."

CHAPTER XIX

A GRAVE MEDITATION

AFTER Mr. Jameston left, William sat in very grave meditation. He knew his father's pride and prejudices too well not to understand fully the strength of his opposition. He knew that he would make every move within the range of parental tactics to prevent his entering the ministry. To persist in a course so distressing to his father was his first sorrow; to force a breach in their happy relations, perhaps to be exiled for years, if not for life, was a weighty care setting about his young heart. Then to lose his patrimony on the eve of marrying a petted child of fortune and, as his father had said, drag her over the country to live upon weekly hat collections, to permit her to suffer the hardships that poverty always carries with it, and that exaggerated and multiplied by the character of the calling, was a situation he could not contemplate. No, he could not marry. This knowledge drew him even nearer to his father, the father wanted to shield his son from the hardships of the calling that the latter seemed determined to follow. The greater the opposition of his father, the greater the evidence of his love; he was fighting

blindly, perhaps unwisely, for what he conscientiously thought was his son's good. But the determination to follow a sacred calling had been no sudden desire on William's part. Ever since years of discretion his heart, mind and daily life had been evolving into the beauty of holiness.

When but a lad of ten at a great dining his parents had given in honor of some distinguished guest, when the company paid much attention to the handsome young heir, and he was told of some act of heroism or daring exploit of first one and then another of the party, he was playfully asked which one would he take for his model?

"That is all very well," he said thoughtfully, "when there is need for it; but we don't have wars all the time."

"Don't want to put your reputation on the shelf, you active young scamp!" and they all laughed merrily and humorously drew him out.

"Well, you are so fond of reading, tell us what hero made a lasting impression, and that you like the best."

The boy was standing in the midst of them. His sweet blue eyes and tumbled blonde curls, embroidered knickerbocker suit, with its snowy ruffles, made an interesting picture, in the graceful pose that children raised under very refining influences often take unconsciously. He had then the little trick of thinking before speaking, that we have noticed still clings to him. Now, after a thoughtful pause, during

which the gentlemen watched with amused interest, he answered without hesitation or embarrassment:

"I like St. John the most."

"St. John! By George! What was his lasting reputation?"

"Jesus loved him," said the child.

"By God! Jameston, you will never raise him!" exclaimed one under his breath, while a subtle change touched the gayety of the group.

Nevertheless, the delicate child did reach manhood, and we find him still clinging to his first principles and walking in the footsteps of his early model, notwithstanding the traditions of his social condition and the opposition of his father.

William saw no chance of bringing his father over to his way of thinking. Jameston, the elder, was a good man, but he held to superficial views in regard to some orthodox questions, and though in the main it was the manner of procedure rather than the cause that prejudiced the old gentleman against the evangelical crusade.

He had righteous contempt for a sanctimonious ignoramus, one haranguing the people in bad English and with worse manners. Such a one may have experienced a change of heart, but if it was not reflected in a change of linen he had no faith in its purity. In this era the horrors of superstition had been replaced by weighty gravity, as though the gross errors of a past generation necessitated rigorous circumspection.

Mr. Jameston, living between the two extremes, naturally imbibed a dislike to both. He acknowledged God as sovereign, and lived according to his own interpretation of his laws.

It must be remembered that the Protestant doctrines, emerging as they did from the tyranny of the Roman Church and the bigotry of the English, must have inherited some traits from each that required generations to tone down into an acceptable and probable exposition of the Gospel. Nor is it singular that these good people, though quickened into new life, through their very zeal for the cause they represented, should have floundered into the emotional extremes that proved so distasteful to less interested persons. But diversities of gifts and different administration, with the same spirit through their various channels, came in touch with all people. That class of men whose self-respect and moral life, as well as plausible religious views, needed a deep-thinking, pleasant-speaking gentleman to approach them in sensible argument, and to live before them as examples of irreproachable grace, looked askance at the "emotionalism" of this latest preaching. On the other hand, however, there was another class to be reached through their emotions only.

William had indubitably been called to the ministry. He had been brought up in the same atmosphere, and taught according to the belief of his fathers, and while in the midst of influences contrary for such work he had felt the call to the ministry.

Opposition did not weaken his determination; it only pained him.

The morning following his painful interview with his father the elder met William at breakfast with his usual kind manner, but a shade of anxiety tempered the conversation.

After a week had passed William again introduced the subject of his vocation.

His father interrupted him, and with severe dignity said: "It is useless to discuss a question that has been decided."

"Well, father, you know that I am sorry to disagree with you about my lifework. I know your opposition is prompted by your love and ambition for me. But there is higher authority to consider than even yours, father, and if I disobey, a heavier penalty than the loss of my patrimony will be visited upon me. Your action will not lessen my love and respect for you, and I hope I will not do anything to lessen yours."

"But," said the old gentleman testily, "you know I have no respect for these people, and you deliberately connect yourself with them. If it was not such a fatiguing and risky voyage, I would close up and go to England to avoid all knowledge of your movements."

"No, father, I will not make that necessary. If it will be more agreeable to you, I will go back to Carolina. I had thought of studying with Jonathan Egbert, but I have made the acquaintance of a young

divine who has come from the North to settle in North Carolina — the Rev. Charles F. Meeds. I will confer with him at once about my determination to enter the ministry, and get his advice.”

“Before you do so, it will be well to consider the question of the pecuniary outcome of your obstinacy. While you have not inherited the title of your ancestors, you have inherited everything else. You have been surrounded by every luxury, every incentive to luxurious living, and your refinement from a child has made you keenly, painfully, sensitive to whatever is the reverse. The difference of your manner of living and your associates will be to you perpetual torture. The renunciation of the world by the monks in their retirement is a happy alternative to embracing the world and living familiarly with the masses. William, my boy, you can never stand it. I believe you are conscientious in thinking it your duty, but the day has passed for martyrs. It is not required in this age, and you will sacrifice your life and my peace by this step.”

“The weight of your opposition, my father, is my heaviest cross,” said William brokenly; “but there is no alternative. I have not chosen my path; it has been pointed out to me. There will have to be another sacrifice through the outcome of my poverty. I cannot marry. I cannot now ask a lady raised as was Miss Chasseur, to suffer with me the hardships of an itinerant life, without the aid that independence gives to lighten them. The sacrifice must be mine

alone. I must face my duty. It would be a great help and comfort to have had the sweet companionship of one so good and lovely. That sweet hope, and my father's companionship, I will lay together on the altar of duty."

The old gentleman left the room, but he did not slam the door. Whatever struggle was going on in him he gave no visible sign.

At the end of a month William had made arrangements for his studies. He located in Greensboro, N. C., and a friendship commenced between William and the Rev. Charles F. Meeds that lasted during life. He was young, brilliant, witty, with a gift of prayer rarely possessed, and a delivery so winning that the most profound theological discourse would be listened to with breathless interest.

This period was fortunate in its ministerial timber, and many intellectual men entered the work, and the rough-hewn doctrine, deftly handled with more enlightened spiritual grace, found its way into the homes of all classes, and Methodism was a great power in spreading the Gospel and in making for the betterment of mankind.

CHAPTER XX

ADVANTAGEOUS POINTS OF SLAVERY

THERE are points in slavery that Abolition philanthropists have overlooked. In all human society there are always two distinct classes — one to be served, and one to serve. Those to be served are expected to pay for value received for well-performed services; on the other hand, none may expect to retain a position except on the condition of services properly rendered. The basis of the dual relationship is, *I* serve for money, and *I* pay money for services; when the service fails the money stops, and there is an end. Between the slaves and their masters, however, this condition had no place. The slaves had their holidays and merrymakings without a thought of the loss of time; the sick, the infirm adult, the little children,—who greatly outnumbered the able workers,—lost no meal or necessary attention through disability. Therefore, in the emancipation of the slaves the master has been relieved of a great taxation, however willingly assumed by his forefathers, and increasing in weight and responsibility as the years passed it on from one generation of owners to another; but there were, besides money value, other considerations — which seem too ob-

struse for the psychological instinct of the Northern philanthropist — that made the relation between master and servant a mutual benefit.

Continual changes of the served and serving prevent the growth of any deep-rooted interest or obligations that make life peaceful and secure. Faith is a great component of the peace of this world; faith in God, faith in your friend, faith in your servant; without this vital strength all of our hopes, our plans, our peace are in jeopardy: without a touch of suspicion faith in a stranger, and the untried lacks the happy guarantee that years of fidelity crowns with security.

Imagination is not a tangible thing upon which to rear a solid, practical structure — hence the faith of the negro in his master. They had the solid comforts of life to take hold of, the never-failing wisdom of superiority to guide them, the commanding presence to ensure respect; they had ever before them the intelligent experience, humane kindness, and prompt helpfulness to draw forth the best feeling of an inferior race, and secure their faithful service.

There was no sting of humiliation in this servitude. No British subject ever bowed before king or queen with more honest pride and loyalty than the Southern slave felt for his master's family, or with so independent a consciousness of sharing his prosperity.

Was it philanthropy to scatter this race as sheep without a shepherd? Was it philanthropy that reduced a neighboring people to penury, and turned

the freedman — subject to no law — in their midst, hungry and homeless; giving him exchange for peace of mind and comfort of body political equality — suffrage — that proved a dangerous weapon in an ignorant, inexperienced hand, to wound him at every move. And the effort to force him upon a superior race in social equality is a “philanthropic” move that God himself will yet question.

The exact relation of master and slave has never been understood by the North; but the freeman who remembers his master’s family, if he was worthy of his confidence, will often look back regretfully to those peaceful days. He may have worked with more regularity, but the peace and plenty thus insured was immeasurably superior to idle hours and friendless years.

And the white people will think kindly of faithful servants who proved their loyalty after their freedom.

It has been said by those who opposed slavery, that some of the slaves in the South were not well treated. Let us see.

This republican government has found it necessary to fine, imprison, and kill; and to send in well-guarded droves unruly freedmen to hard labor.

Did plantation government do worse?

Does it prove that your government is oppressive and severe when your policemen arrest murderers, incendiaries, thieves, and vagrants?

Every government finds that, notwithstanding the

excellency of its laws or the humanity of its rulers, for the safety of the people the wicked must be punished.

Was not the Prophet Elisha permitted to punish with leprosy his servant Gahazi for misrepresentation and obtaining goods under false pretenses?

Under slavery there was less crime in slave-holding States and less punishment for crime than there has been since in the same section of our country.

Too, it has been asserted, in condemnation of slavery, that the slaves were sold and separated, and however kind the master and happy the slaves, at the master's death the slaves were dispersed; and, too, when the children of the owner married the slaves were carried to new homes away from their families.

Now, much of this was sentimental exaggeration. Under slavery separations of the families of the blacks were not so frequent or so extended as they have been since their freedom; when slaves were sold it was generally done in family groups, and the changes made by death or division were usually as agreeable to the negroes as to the white race. A valet or maid liked nothing better than to follow a favorite to a new home, and the faith of the old negroes in the white children they had helped to raise left no cause for fear or sorrow, whatever changes the division might make. All these changes adjusted themselves naturally: and even in the most aggravated cases of fallen fortunes the kind heart of the owner could make some considerate move to insure good

homes and kind friends for their slaves. Changes were made on the plantations at any time by buying or selling husband or wife for the gratification of those whose affections had been set on slaves of other plantations.

There are few instances where gregarious laws either domestic or social are arbitrary. Parties separate when it is best and most convenient for those concerned, else there would be few scholars, few statesmen, few explorers, and few discoverers. The negro suffered no more on account of separation than did his master and his family; nor did his condition as a slave aggravate this grievance that all classes, colors and conditions have to bear.

Negro families are more often separated since emancipation, for cooks, maids, nurses, mechanics, and lumbermen are continually moving north, south, east, and west when inducements are offered for the change.

The perverted imagination of a noted Northern writer collected every calamity that could possibly have befallen a poor, down-trodden race under the dominion of tyrants, which, together with theories based upon most improbable conditions, have all been gathered throughout the servitude of generations, and, crammed into one story, one plantation, and one cabin, have been interpreted in ignorant prejudice and illustrated in the blood of a nation!

It has been said that the misrepresentations of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was the red flag in the arena

of the political differences of the North and South, but even had the conditions of the slave as therein represented all been true, would the means have justified the end?

Shall we take the blameless life of Mrs. Suratt, her persecutions and execution, to prove the cruelty and injustice of the American government?

Shall we take the political craze of Guitteau and Booth's patriotic fanaticism as evidence that American Presidents were tyrants and the safety of the people required their extermination?

Shall we take Jefferson Davis and his persecutions for loyalty to his own people and their cause as a Northern interpretation of the patriotism of Revolutionary forefathers?

Think you that for these errors foreign governments would be justified in uniting with the world at large to besiege American commissaries until reduced to utter emptiness, and its brave men to shadows through starvation — and with freshly equipped armies to overwhelm, kill, imprison, burn, devastate, confiscate, emancipate, and pass a law that the protégés of Castle Garden — Socialist, Anarchist, the ignorant and vile, all — indiscriminately should have equal rights with your honorable patriotic people; to risk the union of knavery and ignorance of the masses into a majority; to maliciously overthrow institutions dearer than life?

Would it not have been a brave patriot who could have lived through such a time — to have gathered

the remnant of his impoverished family, penniless and hopeless, to face the difficulties?

Well, that was the situation of the North and South. I doubt that the North will ever comprehend in its fullness the want of wisdom and humanity in its administration.

The two sections are as diverse in habits, in temperament, and in political requirements as Russia and England. Yet these differences are being slowly recognized, owing to social intercourse, intermarriage, and business relations, rather than political discriminations. The angularity of indifference and insensibility on one side, and the heat of sensitive resentment on the other have been softened by better acquaintance and by ties of common interest, and when politics shall adjust itself more to the needs of the people and less to official aggrandizement and the vainglory of prejudiced cranks, will there be established a government worthy of two such great sections of our great country.

CHAPTER XXI

UNCLE EBEN AND AUNT LIZA DISCUSS WILLIAM'S DEPARTURE

"WELL," said Eben, "that's the way it is. Old Marster so proud he can't 'bide common folks, and Mars William so good he wants to forgive 'em, and he'p 'em git to heaven."

"And yer say he's done gone fer good?" asked his wife, with anxiety in her tone.

"Just betwixt us, Liza, Mars Lee is trying to bring Mars William to his senses, but he can't live without him, any more than Mars William can git on, to himself. He allers done just like he pleased, and it's too late to come down now with his 'thority."

"He's one good chile," said Aunt Liza; "just like his mar; and dem big blue eyes and yaller hair. Dat's what makes me disbleeve Marster gwine to let him go sho' 'nuff. He set such store by her; dare's de big house, de fine furnicher, and de shinin' silver, with you and Jim er-slidin' round de table; but Mars Lee knows it ain't de same as when Miss Mary was here, and, bress God! it'll be wuss when de chile is gone," and Aunt Liza wiped the tears from her eyes.

"Marster never slept none last night. Walked de floor till 'most day. I 'spect now 'twas de sperit a workin' him."

"Debbil, you'd better say," crossly remarked Aunt Liza.

Though she loved her master with deep and faithful affection, and would have resented the slightest breath of disloyalty to him from anyone else, she was irritated by the gloom of the once bright home. Its somberness compared to its former glory was depressing now, in her almost maternal anxiety for William.

When William had taken Aunt Liza's faithful old hand and said to her, "Good-by, Mammy, I don't know when I shall see you again, but I shall never forget you and Uncle Eben. Take good care of father, and if he gets sick, you must make Jim write me."

Jim was "Mars William's" special waitman. William had taught him to read and write, as was often the case with favorite servants or when they showed any aptness that way.

Mammy Liza took out the paper that William had ingeniously folded in the way then in vogue, before the days of envelopes, and examined it with a kind of curious pathos. She then wrapped it up and put it in a little box for safekeeping.

"He oughter have carried Jim with him," she said disconsolately.

"But I heard him say," replied Uncle Eben,

“ ‘No, father, it’s a new business looking out for myself, and I won’t risk Jim’s loyalty, should he become hungry and homesick.’ ”

“ They don’t enny of the young folks know when dey’s well off. He oughter took Jim with him,” persisted Aunt Liza, “ and arter ther experance by they seff. When they did come back we could uv killed the prodical calf, and settled down in peace. They’d had sperance ernuff ter lass, I cacculate.”

“ Yes,” laughed Uncle Eben, “ Jim would have enuff, ef he earnt his living a week.”

“ Aunt Liza,” said Jake, a negro from a neighboring villa, “ what is dat I hear dey say about Mars William making his par so mad he done driv him offen de lot? ”

“ Hit’s er lie, no matter what yer hearn! Driv Mars William off! Ain’t dat more like er nigger? Allers gittin’ things tail end! Mars William gone ter ’spound de Gospel to de Nor’ Carliny saffages, and his par is sorry ernuff ter let him go, and so is I, fer that matter. Dat what yer bring yer Marster over here fer, ter be spyng his betters ’fairs? ”

“ Good Lord, Aunt Liza! Sho’ thing youse spiteful! I axe all manner of ’scuses for my concernng yer curosty. I likes Mars William myself. I ain’t s’archin’ nobody’s ’fairs. ’Peers like yere monstrous easy riled.”

“ Well, hit’s nuff ter rile ennybody, Jake, ter have fool questions and sich *notified* by outsiders, and de chile er dey heart jest leff ’em.”

"Bress God, Aunt Liza! is Jim gone?"

"Now dar 'tis erg'in! What in de name uv de Lord is Jim goin' fer? How much gospel Jim got ter be taking off ennywhars? Ain't I got de right to hanker arter de white chile I nussed ever sence he was born, and he good 'nuff ter walk right inter heaven dis minit? And he's gone 'cause he ain't satisfied to stay home, like some other young men dat I knows uv, and dat you knows uv too, Jake. Just spend all ther time galavantin' round day and night arter no good! And take somebody follerin' 'em up an' paying 'em outen court and sich! Yer see, Jake, I can hear somethings too, 'dout gittin' 'em tail foremost, nuther."

"I 'low," said Jake, stuffing his hands in his trousers pockets and leaning against the door-facing, with a kind of dogged independence, "I 'lows Mars Dan kin kick up de debbil ef he wants ter. Ole Marster is able ter pay fer it, and don't ax nobody no odds, nor 'seurity nuther."

"Well, God er Mighty knows 'tain't nothing ter brag erbout."

"Come, Liza," said Uncle Eben kindly, "I 'low 'tain't no use ter git up a fuss 'bout what none uv us got de ruling uv. I know Jake had rather have a mug of beer and taters than so much jaw."

"I 'clare 'fore God, yer hit it right, Uncle Eben. I'm much erbleege ter yer. I allers say I jest know Aunt Liza makes the best beer in all Virginy, and sich taters! 'peers like dey's sugared clear through.

I allus do say, wharsumever I goes to, that they has more good things to Mars Lee's, and the plenti-fullest, of anywhar else."

So good humor was restored to these self-appointed champions of their young masters, one through a never-failing appetite and the other through super-abundant concessions of their family supremacy.

The slaves as a class were good-natured. They were well cared for, without the irritating mental cares of providing for themselves and family. The wealth and greatness of their masters were matters of personal pride to them, and though often rude and coarse in their language to each other, they were more apt to display anger or resentment at any reflection or disrespect to their masters than to themselves. It was the most vulnerable spot in their happy-go-lucky natures. Those who had given them and their habits a little surface study since the war, and rather from a political standpoint, will never be able to understand or fully describe their relations with their masters' family before the war. There never has been and will never again be so happy an adjustment of laws of servitude. God has instituted in the inferior mind as a class a disposition to regard that which is great with veneration, and that which is beautiful with adoration. As the dark and homely Indian was at first drawn to the white race through their superior and almost supernatural comeliness, so was the great difference between the negro and white race a most natural and solid platform for the

supremacy of the white race. God saw fit to make this difference. Natural laws have given the white man superiority in physical beauty and a concomitant precedence in all things, and as far back as the most remote investigation and profound research has multiplied the records of ethnology, the white race has always led the world as the "survival of the fittest," and no subject born and raised under the power of a sovereign ever felt greater love for his king and pride for the kingdom than the slave for his master and his plantation home.

Aunt Liza represents her class fairly. There was no hypocrisy in the tender love that would make her gather the baby William in her arms and say protectingly, and with faithful watchfulness, as he played about the yard, "Mammy kill de las' one ov 'em dat pesters her little white lamb." She noticed the slightest meddling of the black children or too familiar handling of the little William even on the part of her Jim, who was near William's age. "Don't you *dare* tech him!" was a warning note heard on all occasions. Now she was more concerned about his going away than if it had been Jim. "You are big and strong and could do well enough ennywhere, but that poor chile don't know nothin' but talkin' ter big folks, and studyin' his books. Jim, yer oughter gone wid him, ter see after him. I don't know what in the name of God Marster thinkin' 'bout. I'll tell him so too, first chance I git 'thout 'peerin' too peart, to go argyfyng with my betters."

The negro has no tact; his mental impulses are of the same order as his physical acts. Awkward and uncouth, he knows no roundabout tactics to avoid the angles of unpleasant situations, and his attempts at finesse are amusingly transparent.

Aunt Liza would say, "If yer gits sick, Mars Lee, dere's dem dat orter be writ to, and Jim's done had his 'structions 'bout it." And the interest with which she kept herself posted on the condition of her master's health was worthy of a modern insurance company.

And the old gentleman found himself with humorous mobility of constitution "mighty poorly" one day, to be followed the next by being "uncommonly smart."

It was pleasant to know that William had made arrangements to hear from him. It was a comfort to know that he was within call, and there were many times when the lonely old man was well-nigh tempted to yield to the craving of his heart and permit the faithful health spy to recall his boy.

CHAPTER XXII

JANNETTE CHASSEUR GRADUATES

DURING the interval of the year in which Jameston had studied for the ministry, Jannette had graduated, and the close of Jannette's school years was also the limit to William's probation. He was at liberty to enter her list of suitors, which was no insignificant one, there being a promising young lawyer with a good income, a handsome young colonel, and several gentlemen of leisure with great expectations.

The first opportunity Mr. Jameston had for private conversation with Jannette, he said:

"I hope you don't think me selfishly impatient, but my duties call me away to-morrow, and I could not go without this talk. It is one, too, of especial importance to me, for two reasons. First, in that I have your father's permission to ask for your hand in marriage at this time. The other is — I must not do so. My great love for you and my solicitude for your comfort and happiness support both the claims and the objection to my pressing my suit. You know I wrote to you of the consequences of my decision as to my vocation — I lose my inheritance. I know that your pure love is superior to the mere

question of money, but, all else being equal, wealth is not to be despised or lightly rejected. At the time that I asked permission to be your suitor I was the only heir to a very large fortune. I thought at first that it might be a test as to my fitness for such sacred work as I believe I am called upon to do. My father argued strongly upon my incapacity to adapt myself to the true needs of the masses, and I hoped that his love for me would impel him to recall me; but this year of peculiar trial and probation has passed without his forgiveness or my having been able to see my way sufficiently to anything like a comfortable living. I know, darling, that you cannot doubt my love for you. I cannot give you greater proof of it than to resist the temptation to put forth all my powers of persuasion, to picture to you the difference between my life with you by my side and my life in dreary loneliness. No, I am not selfish enough for that, but I do crave with all my heart your sympathy and love and the assurance that you understand the matter from the standpoint of my changed financial condition."

"Yes, Mr. Jameston, I understand. I think my position is about as embarrassing as yours. You know I might say that as long as I have not been disinherited — that — that —" Then blushing beautifully, "It would be too awkward to offer my fortune to a gentleman who is excusing himself from being a suitor, would it not?" laughing sweetly.

William colored.

"But the difficulty stands practically the same. Your parents and friends have the right to respect the best alliance, and out of six or eight suitors I alone can make no settlement."

"You said something about all else being equal."

"Yes. But we will allow that the others are all above average intelligence and are, of course, gentlemen."

"But," persisted Jannette, smiling, "you said 'all else being equal.' It is, then, to be presumed that I favor each of these six or eight suitors?"

William's face brightened as of old. He caught Jannette's hand and pressed it to his lips with real emotion.

"The possibility that you may not is great comfort."

"Mr. Janeston, in the requisites for an eligible suitor you must allow that my favor is of the most vital importance."

"I admit that, without your favor, there is not the shadow of a chance for success."

"Then, if you withdraw from the list, the only one who has my favor, you leave me without a suitor."

"It, however, leaves you a very devoted lover," he said earnestly, "and I shall be selfish enough to hope that you will not look with favor upon any suitor until I can come to you with some degree of self-respect. My father may relent."

"Or I may endow some spinsters' home with my

inheritance. But I place so much stress on wealth you may be sure the spinster I endow will be Jannette Chasseur."

William laughed. "How you would be the life of our old Virginia home! Do you know the greatest temptation offered me? My father gave me the alternative — to be a penniless exile for the cause of Christianity, or to take you as my bride home to be the joy of my life and the pride of my grand old father, to be reinstated in his love and companionship without a thought or care about the practical concerns of life." The thought had brightened his face; then as suddenly the illumination paled out to a purer luminosity of Christian resignation as he finished: "But I must take up my cross in poverty and loneliness — an exile from home, an ineligible suitor."

"Well," said Jannette encouragingly, "you must not be unhappy when you have done your duty."

"You will stand by me that far," he said gratefully.

"Why, yes, I am going to stand by you through everything, even when you consider me and my fortune too much of a responsibility," smiling archly.

"I shall continue to hope that my father will recall me. I pray that his prejudice against my sacred calling will be removed, and that you will love and trust me while I endeavor to work my way to a competency."

"Perhaps," said Jannette gravely, "I had better

place this sacred ring back into your keeping for the present."

Before she had time to remove it he clasped both of her hands with his.

"No, no, my darling! let that signet of our trust remain. I cannot think of a possibility that could weaken its significance. You remember that was not an engagement ring, but the seal of our love and hopes. I cannot think that that can be broken. The sacrifice I have made has delayed the fulfilment — keeps me from availing myself of the privilege accorded me a year ago; but you are willing to wear my ring?"

"Oh, yes! besides, why be sorrowful over so simple a matter as delay? We have both much youth on our side, you know. Father insisted that there was time enough, and I really think that a year or two out of school in more practical duties and mature thought is worthy of my consideration. You don't know how much of a child I am, how dependent I am upon the older members of the family."

"I am afraid I am not to be reconciled to my fate," he said, smiling sadly. "I am regretful, too, about the unwillingness with which I make the sacrifice; I chafe so impatiently at the restrictions. All the selfishness in my nature concentrates at one point — the tenderness of my love for you. I resent my lost fortune on account of my love. My father's prejudice touches me harshly through my love, and I am not sufficiently consecrated for so great a gift of

love. You speak lightly of delay. These other suitors with nothing to prevent their pressing their claims — I feel very badly about them. I am even anxious that my brilliant friend and confrère, Charlie Meeds, is becoming too fond of his little fair-haired friend, as he so often speaks of you with growing affection. Why should he not love you, and win you? He has few equals in the ministry or out of it. How intellectual he is, and how delightful socially! Oh, Jannette, if he should win you it would break my heart."

"I do not think you need fear Mr. Meeds as a rival. I know that we have been drawn to each other in an unusual degree of friendship. Perhaps had I never met you, and he had never met a certain New York lady before he came South, he would not be going back soon to bring her as his bride."

"Is that so?" he asked joyfully. "Well, that complication is all that saved him. I will give them a sincere welcome when they return."

"And so will I," said Jannette, smiling at William's restored cheerfulness.

CHAPTER XXIII

MR. JAMESTON SENDS FOR THE DOCTOR

"How is yer feeling this morning, Mars Lee?" asked Aunt Liza, eyeing the elder Jameston critically.

"I feel very badly," he said weakly.

"I see you don't seem ter have no taste fer your breakfast."

"No, Aunt Liza, I have lost my appetite entirely."

"Peers like you gits worser ev'ry day, and ter tell the trufe, Mars Lee, you shows you are worse off than you feels. You naterly looks all run down."

"Yes," said he, humoring her evident satisfaction in his increasing ill health, "yes, I have been growing a little worse every day for some time past. I'll give up now and go to bed."

"Thank God," was Aunt Liza's involuntary ejaculation. "You ought ter gone ter bed a month ago. I knowed you was sick."

The old gentleman could not refrain from smiling, but he continued in a weak voice, "Tell Jim to send one of the boys for Doctor Bragdon," and he walked slowly to his bedroom.

Aunt Liza went in haste to Jim. "Come down

ter my house dis very minit, Jim. Eben, you go send Harry after Doctor Bragdon."

"Whut yer want, mur?" asked Jim, whittling a stick as he came leisurely to his mother's call.

"You come on, and be quick about it," she said authoritatively, walking briskly toward her house.

Curiosity quickened Jim's gait, and he hastened indoors after his mother, who closed the door behind them.

"Thank the Lord, Jim! Mars Lee has give up at last."

She was fumbling about in her chest in search of something, and soon brought out the little tin box, with the folded paper that William had left, to be sent him in case his father should be ill.

"Why, mur, Mars Lee ain't nowise likely ter die."

"I'm er-going ter send this letter off 'fore he has er chance ter be better," said Aunt Liza firmly.

"All right," said Jim, laughing. "I'm willing ernough. I bleve he's be knowing ter the trick."

"No, kane ter let yore Master die 'fore you do the writing. Hit will take er long time fer the letter ter go, and hit will take time fer Mars William ter come. Mars Lee might git well or he mout die. I ain't 'sponsible fer whut is going ter happen; I'm 'sponsible fer whut is; so you jest put it down on the inside like Mars William said to." Aunt Liza spread the paper down on a table with the air of one who had fully made up her mind as to what she would do, regardless of consequences.

"I'll have ter git somethin' ter write with fust."

Wending his way to the library, Jim selected such material as he could best use, and soon returned. He pulled a chair up to the table, and after fidgeting to get in a good writing position and about the proper distance from the table, and after a minute inspection of the pen point against his thumb nail, he dipped the pen in the ink and said, with it poised above the paper: "Now, mur, whut must I say?"

"Say-er —" Here Aunt Liza rolled her eyes upward and around into an expression of serious thought. "Say, Dear Mars William."

DEAR MARS WILLIAM

your par aint alein to hurt but mur says he might be took wus and she was afraid he mout be took better before she could git the letter off so she is goin to giv it the start of the Docter Prince has got so roller kin that I dassent turn him out of the stable Hecter is too lazy and lonsom to bark mur says god bless you Mars Wlilam and howdy your obedy yent servent JIM JAMESTON.

Aunt Liza watched the progress of the letter with great interest, and when Jim signed his name with a flourish and seized the sandbox and sprinkled it over with the black sand, a smile of intense satisfaction and pride in the entire performance spread over her brown face.

"No kane to pepper rit, Jim. If old Master catches it before de mail, I 'low it 'twill be hot ernuff."

"But ain't she fine, though!" said Jim, straightening up and eyeing the work critically by changing

the set of his head. "Now that is done up all right."

"Kin you fold it back like Mars William fixed it?"

After this important ceremony was performed, Aunt Liza took it saying:

"Now I ain't er-going ter chance it going by you, Jim, 'kaze you don't know which way Mars William be."

"But, mur, I knows the way ter put it in the post office."

"Post office? Humph! Mars William ain't at no post office. How do I know that man will send it ter him? I'm going to see Doctor Bragdon 'bout it."

"You'd better not; he'll tell Mars Lee 'bout it, and then it won't see daylight ag'in."

Aunt Liza turned it over and over thoughtfully, then said, "Jim, you say yer know whar ter cair rit?"

"Yes'm; I carries all the others."

"Well, here," she said reluctantly, "you take it right there 'thout breathing, and be sure you give it to the right one; and, Jim," she called as he started off, "you better hang round awhile to make show it gits off."

Mr. Jameston was not a person to make an exhibition of his feeling, and no one knew how grieved he had been by his separation from William; he had truly been getting worse each day. Having had full time to consider the question on both sides, he

was beginning to view the matter in a new light. Knowing that William was intellectually and morally capable of selecting his own lifework, he felt that he should not have pressed his parental authority with so much severity, and he now regretted that he had not let William peacefully follow the dictates of his own heart and conscience. He knew that William's move had been a sacrifice in every way — he had gained nothing from a worldly point of view. Indeed, he had lost that which was most dear to him — the old home, dear to his heart, and his father, whom he had loved with the tenderness of a girl. From a boy William and the father had grown into a comradeship that was strengthened by William's intellectual growth; and now, had not an occasional letter passed between them, the old man would not have been able to have borne the separation as long as he did.

When William had written he had made no allusion to his work other than saying: "I have never been very strong, but the pressing need of my time gives me little occasion to pamper any indolence or indisposition on my part. I have not had a doctor since I left home."

His father had replied in kind, making no allusion to the separation. He did not say how his heart ached every day for William's return. He wrote that everything was going on as usual, and mentioned the visit of some grandee who had enlivened the city for a short while, and had flashed through the Jameston mansion with unusual brilliancy owing to the present

gloom of its halls. He said he had read a very complimentary notice of William's friend, Charles Meeds. He did not say that he had also read a beautiful tribute to his noble son, extolling the intellectual and personal magnetism and the power of oratory and pure example that destined the son to take high rank among the great men of the day, albeit it marked the expanding of the intellect beyond the physical strength of the young man.

It was that which had made the old man's heart fail him. William, his dear son, must come home to rest, and the trouble-tossed mind and body had finally surrendered to a real indisposition, and yielded to the long desired and often expressed wish of Aunt Liza:

"Giv up and go to bed; yer hain't er-gwine ter be better tell yer git rid uv all dat bile."

The heart and liver had similar functions in the mind of Aunt Liza. A derangement of the liver made one sick and miserable. Trouble had the same effect, and a course of medicine good for one ought to be good for the other. So she sent for the doctor to treat "Ole Marster's" liver, feeling sure of beneficial results all round, and Mars William's coming would perfect the cure. So let us hope after a consultation of the two great healers the bilious aristocrat pulled through.

CHAPTER XXIV

AUNT LIZA DELIVERS THE CONTENTS OF HER MIND

THE required time for a letter to reach William had passed, and Aunt Liza had commenced looking for him. And Mr. Jameston was more impatient. The pleasure of anticipation was freely indulged in from early morning until late at night. The master had not got up from his sickness, but it had been his amusement for several days to say as Aunt Liza came in to assist in making him comfortable:

“Well, Aunt Liza, I guess I am able to get up to-day.”

“Git up, yer say. Now, Mars Lee, yer jes’ fixin’ ter be sot back. A collapse is nuff sight wuss dan bein’ tuck. Yer know yer ain’t able ter git up.”

“But I am so much better I shall risk getting up and sitting by the window awhile.”

“Well, you is better,” she reluctantly assented, “but I am free to confess, now you is better, that you was uncommon bad off—wusser than you knowed yerself. In fact, Mars Lee, I may as well say it out and be done with it. Jim writ ter Mars William like he told him ter do. I wan’t going ter have my blessed Missus’ child er perauch me all the days of he life for keeping him away from his par’s

funeral, just outen the bigitry of his family. When folks come nigh unto death, Mars Lee, hit's time ter do away with bigity disfigurations." Having delivered herself of her mind, which was done very hurriedly, approaching the door as she spoke, she made a hasty exit. Only in extreme cases did she ever "talk up to Mars Lee, as big as de best, for when he was sot, he was as stiff and unhandy as er hot poker."

If Aunt Liza had not closed the door so quickly, to be rid of Mars Lee's presumed disapprobation, she would have heard a lively little chuckle, and Mars Lee could scarcely get his face straight and sufficiently dignified to ask Eben as he came in:

"Eben, what is that I hear about William being written for? I was not sufficiently ill to warrant such a measure."

"I didn't have nothin' ter do with it, Mars Lee. I didn't know 'bout it tell it was done sent, and you must make 'lowances for Liza, Mars Lee; you might er-looked sicker dan you was."

Mr. Jameston wondered if his self-consciousness made him sensitive, or if there was really sly humor in Eben's accusation.

When Aunt Liza got outside, she met Jim in the hall. Holding up both hands and rolling her eyes up, she exclaimed:

"La, Jim, I'm naterly weak! Lemme set down. I've jest dis minit told Ole Marster, and left!"

"Told old Marster what?" asked Jim unsympathetically.

"What! Now ain't dat mo' like er nigger. What on God's yearth did I have ter tell 'im, but that you writ dat letter!"

"Good Lord, mur, is he mad?" asked Jim, showing more white teeth than trepidation, in a broad grin.

"I didn't wait ter find out. If he's mad ernuff ter be sot back tell de chile gits here, I 'low we can stand it."

"Well, he needn't blame it on me. Mars William said do it, and you said do it."

"Bress God! I'd say do it ag'in, fer dat matter."

"Another thing," said Jim, "he is too weak to straighten up and look down on you, and that's all he ever does. It used to scare me like the devil, but I've got taller myself now," and he straightened himself, and looked down on his mammy, mimicking the stern dignity of Mars Lee so well that Nellie, a housegirl, who had come in sight of the pantomime, had to stuff her apron in her mouth to keep from laughing too loud, and his mammy's restrained merriment brought the tears.

"Look here, you niggers, git funder from Mars Lee's door wid yer giggling," said Aunt Liza, moving to the dining-room.

As soon as Nellie could speak for laughing she said:

"Jim, I 'clare fore God, when I see you standing in the passage, I thought 'twas Marster's shadow

flung on de wall, and I turn clare round ter see whar Mars Lee was. Te-he-he!"

"You let Marster ketch yer making game uv him, boy, yer won't cast nuther shadow soon."

Nellie's giggling continued, as Jim further entertained his audience by going through a number of Chesterfieldian graces peculiar to his master, such as entering the dining-room, asking a blessing, and drinking a toast.

Nellie's paroxysms of smothered laughter and Jim's theatricals were aggravated by Aunt Liza's remarks:

"You let Marster ketch you in his cheer, boy! Jim! don't you dare tetch dat decanter. Mars Lee toast yer hide!"

"Jim," said Nellie, "time fer yer to stop now. Whoever heard of handing round de *toast* in er wine-glass!" and to do the subject justice, in her restrained laughter, Nellie showed every tooth in her head.

"Look here now! you chillun quit projickin' and clare outen here. Nuff's ernuff," said Aunt Liza, growing tired of their foolishness.

"Well, Aunt Liza, Jim would make a dog laugh."

"If yer kin rub dem knives as good as yer kin laugh at Jim's tomfoolery, hit'll do. Go long wid yer, Jim, and let de gal erlone. She can't do her work fer gigglin' at you. Mars Lee gittin' up; better see ter his boots."

"You ain't looking for Mars William this morn-ing, are you?" asked Eben, poking his smiling face

in at the dining-room door. "Sounds like you were getting ready for a feast."

"Dese fool niggers, Eben. I can't learn 'em no quality manners 'cept before the white folks. Just let white folks turn their backs and they turn to fool niggers ag'in."

"Now you got that back'ards, mur. I puts on my best manners when the white folks turns their backs."

"You'd better," said Nellie. "'Twon't do ter have two Mars Lees strutting round here tergedder, eating of toast outen a wineglass. One at er time, Lord!"

Nellie's hilarity had reached its climax. Just as she finished speaking she had thrown her hand back in which she held a knife. The knife struck a beautiful cut-glass tumbler, knocking it from the table and breaking it in pieces.

Eben looked regretful, Aunt Liza wrathful, but Jim was jubilant. "Cutting the pigeon wing" lightly in the doorway, he pointed at the broken glass, mimicking Nellie: "One at a time, Lord!"

Nellie out of self-defense crawled under the table to keep Aunt Liza from seeing her laugh.

"You, Nellie, come from under that table, you scaddleous nigger! God er Mighty knows yer ain't worf yer vit'als. That makes two things you broke this week. Well, when there ain't none of 'em left, den dere'll be a reck'ning."

"Aunt Liza, I ain't 'gine ter break nare nother one. 'Twan't me nohow; I never totch it. Hit

wan't sitting up thar good, nuther." And Nellie crawled out with an assumed expression of seriousness that wasn't large enough to cover the corners of her mouth or weighty enough to take the twinkle from her eyes. "Just as like as not 'twas cracked, anyhow. Dat what comes of having chany so fine yer can't see it, and hit breaks 'fore you tetch hit."

"You can see hit now, can't yer?" asked Aunt Liza with supreme disgust. "Well, take up de pieces. Come back here! you don't call that tuck up, do you? Blind as I am, I can see yer ain't half done it. Look dar, under de cheer! dar's a piece shining by the table leg. God er Mighty knows I'd rather do a thing myself than ter see one of you young gals messing round. I was smart when I was er gal and spry as er kitten."

Nellie looked doubtfully at Aunt Liza. "Hit's been so long you've forgot."

"I ain't forgot my manners, anyhow, and if you keep on like you've started, you won't forgit nuther, 'kase you'll never have none ter forgit. Go long with ye, an' stop argufying with your betters. I trying to rub some of the nigger offen you, and you like a wild colt, while I breaking you in, you breaking up everything in the house, leastwise ever'thing you tetch. Go long tell Polly to send in breakfast. See if yer can do that 'thout breaking yer neck."

"Te-he-he! Aunt Lizy, you is so funny!

I mighty nigh kill myself when I'm where you is.
Te-he-he!"

"Go long, gal! You laugh and poke fun at me,
ole as I am, I'll break somethin', and it won't be a
glass nuther."

CHAPTER XXV

MARS LEE'S ANTICIPATION

MR. JAMESTON was now so nearly recovered as to go into the library. Here he sat by the window overlooking the lawn. After his confinement it was very restful to lounge in a great chair and watch the vehicles and pedestrians go by. The street was near enough to vary the monotony, yet too far to be worried by recognition or noise. The library was a large, airy, and well-lighted apartment, handsomely furnished. In it, as well as each of the other apartments, wealth, combined with cultured taste, had perfectly appointed its furnishing.

The convalescent man was at that state of mental lassitude when one has no inclination to select an occupation. The tension of vital energy had slackened, and now it required an effort to even gradually wind its sagging threads up to the point of exertion. So at present he was content to recline in dressing-gown, and slippers, while Eben noiselessly moved in and out. If Mars Lee cleared his throat, Eben knew it was a prelude to a question or a commission. Faithful consideration for the comfort of his master was better than the call bell near at hand. Eben was always at hand. These two men had been boys

together. Eben had always accompanied Mars Lee in his rounds of pleasure, he had shared his sports and his travels, and been his chief man about the house since his marriage. After the death of the greatly loved mistress Eben's sympathetic reverence for his master's great sorrow and gloomy loneliness was that of a faithful guardian. Eben looked after his master's interest with honest solicitude, and it was requited by a generosity and appreciation that can never be understood except in a similar situation.

"Ahem! Eben, what time does the stage pass?"

"About one o'clock, sir, when the weather is fine as it is now. You have been sitting up so long, sir, shall I bring you a glass of wine; or had you better lie down awhile, sir?"

"I'll take the wine, Eben. Liza tried her best to keep me down until William came, but my constitution was too strong for her." And he laughed good-humoredly.

Eben smiled in sympathy with his master's humor and, after replacing the wine service, walked to the door and peered down the street to listen for the notes of the stage bugle. His faithful heart was getting uneasy, lest poor Mars Lee should be disappointed at last. Suppose the letter never got there! Well, the thing had worked so well as far as Mars Lee was concerned, that if *that* letter did not get there, another should be written. Mars William had to come now, after Mars Lee started to look for him.

Aunt Liza was impatient and uneasy too, and came out with a broom, making a feint of sweeping the front porch.

"Eben, do you reckon he has had time to get the letter, and come? 'Case if he has had time, he's coming," she said confidently.

"Yes, Liza, I think he has, and I hope to God he will come. Old Marster's setting there by the window a-watching. I couldn't stand seeing him let down again."

"He oughter be let down, and that hard, too, if 'twan't for Mars William not coming. He no business let him go."

"Don't be too hard on him, Liza. The head of the house must stand up for the greatness of the house."

"No use in being too bigerty, Eben. I seen the Methidy parson, and he looked like a gentleman. How come he ain't as good as t'other gentleman?"

"They are too good, Liza, that's what's the matter; they don't keep the right kind of company for Marster — too pokey. He wanted Mars William to have a good time, like he always had."

"Well, yer ain't erbleeged ter go to the devil ter have a good time, is yer?"

"You see, the parson preaches that way — about the rich can't go to heaven any more than the eye of a needle can go through a camel!"

"Good God omighty, Eben! that's why Mars William giv' it all up."

"Yes," said Eben. "I don't know how 'twill turn out."

"Well, Eben, old Marster took my telling him I had sent fer Mars William better than I thought he would. I 'spected he'd be biling hot, and blow the whole kit up Salt River."

"Humph!" said Eben, laughing softly, "what you thought was coming out of the bung with a pop had been leaking at the spicket all the week; I caculate he had tracked you all the way."

Just then the clear notes of a bugle fell like sweetest music on the listening ear. It was the signal of the approaching stage-coach.

Eben jumped from the post against which he had been leaning, and went down to the gate.

Aunt Liza retired into the background, but to a point from which she could watch for the stage.

Mr. Jameston started up hastily, his heart beating rapidly. Then the possibility of William not coming caused a reaction, and he sank back into the great chair anxiously expectant. With eager eyes he again watches the coach, sees the lumbering vehicle swing up to the gate. Gad! perhaps it is only a package to be delivered. But no, kind old Eben has caught a glimpse of William and hastens back to inform the old Master.

"All right, sir! Mars William has come!"

Thoughtful old Eben! He now hurries down to the gate, with a happy, smiling face, to relieve William's anxiety as to his father.

"Mars Lee's up, and looking fur you."

William, his face brightening, said: "I am glad to find him so much better. And the rest of you, Uncle Eben, all well?" shaking the old man's hand.

"Everything's all right now, sir, since you have got back."

"Thank you, Uncle Eben. I am glad to get back." He hastens in two steps at a time, up the flight of steps, and father and son are folded in each other's arms.

"Father, I am relieved to find you so much improved."

"Son, I am so much better for your having come. I had quite a bilious attack. Your black mammy could not stand your continued absence any more than I could, so we gradually gravitated toward the way to get you home. I had to get sick out of self-defense, for I think a little more and Aunt Liza would have dosed me beyond recovery."

Aunt Liza was highly gratified a little later when William thanked her for letting him hear so promptly of his father's illness, and the good care that had nursed him back to health.

It was a small dinner party, father and son, but it was a happy one.

"What kind of trip did you have?"

"The best I ever had, I had such good company."

"It must have been, to make a stage journey even tolerable. What company had you?"

"Charlie Meeds. He is not only very intellectual,

but as jolly as a boy. He can say more quaint things than any boy, for he is brimful of humor. We would forget to count the mile-posts in our animated conversation, and had I not been anxious about you it would have been a most enjoyable trip."

"Why did you not bring him in with you? I like good company myself."

"I would have been overjoyed to have done so had I known it would have been agreeable. He has been such a good friend to me, I would like you to know him."

"Where is he stopping?"

"At McIlhenny's. His circuit extends up here. He preaches at —— Chapel Saturday, and here Sunday."

"Humph! A parson, is he?"

"He will be one of the greatest men of his day. The preachers are not all after the order of Parson Brown," said William, with a quizzical glance at his father. "It is not simply the preacher I want you to know, or because he has been a friend to me; but the interesting gentleman. Father, let him come."

There was a look of gentle entreaty on the face of his only child, so like that of his sweet wife, the proud man could not be stubborn, and the consent was given so softly that William smiled his acknowledgment through misty eyes, feeling in this concession how perfect and complete was the reconciliation between them.

CHAPTER XXVI

MR. JAMESTON GOES TO THE MEETING-HOUSE

SUNDAY morning at breakfast William ventured to ask his father if he felt able to go to church. "I think it a good opportunity for you to size up Charlie Meeds, and if you are not pleasantly impressed I shall not urge you to meet him."

"I don't know whether I can stand the long service or not — the churches are so bare and comfortless," replied the invalid doubtfully.

"We could retire before the close of the service, if you were too uncomfortable," ventured William, having such faith in Mr. Meeds' powers as to believe that leaving would not be necessary.

"Well," agreed his father, "I rather like the idea of getting out. Suppose we give it a trial?"

"I am sure the ride, the fresh air, the mental process of criticism will be beneficial and strengthening," said William, with ready tact, while he wondered at his father's ready compliance.

The fact was, William's firmness in adopting Methodism and his high esteem for his friend, had not only made his father curious, but had interested him as things important and dear to his son, who,

as we have seen, filled the older man's heart with tenderness. If his fastidious son William could be a happy and enthusiastic member of any organization, and fraternize with congenial pleasure with its members, why should he stand aloof? No, he would not pursue any course through ignorance and blind prejudice; he would look into the matter himself, and be able to decide his course with more conscientious exactness. If the young preacher's doctrine and manner displeased him, he would not invite him to his house or have his exclusiveness broken into by low-bred associates, no matter what strange views William might advance.

This gives two interesting points from which to view Methodism at this era. First, its presentation; second, its acceptance. As the creed advanced there were difficulties to be overcome peculiar to the era and the people. There is an inherent something in man antagonistic to advice, and to be dictated to with an assumption of authority is often viewed as an insult. We see it in Elisha's advice to Naman; in Paul as a new convert accused of being a pestilent fellow, a mover of sedition, a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes. We can see it in Christ's advice to the rich young man. So we may expect to find it in the disciples of Methodism.

There is also a dislike to innovation. As a general thing people cling to doctrines and principles of their forefathers, and are distrustful of revolutions.

Then the pride and bigotry of the English Church

had reigned supreme so long that its principles had taken deep root, and the Church was not to be shaken by every passing wind. Its various branches had grown further apart in its upward growth, but the sap that nourished the main body ran through each limb, however small a twig or however far it spread out; a tiny vein of the same vitality nourished and sustained it. And so it was that the generations branching out from the old stock, inheriting its pride and prejudice, spread its beliefs from one continent to another in its upward search for light; but in proportion to its healthy absorption, so will the impurities of bygone errors drop off as defective fruit; so in course of time we have new doctrines and new generations of believers.

To engraft one upon the other required skill and opportunity, and here was the chief difficulty — all were not skillful, nor would all volunteer opportunities.

It may seem odd, at the first thought, that the ignorant generally accept a plausible tenet more readily than the intelligent. The ignorant will receive ocular demonstration and spiritual enlightenment unquestioned, as the blind man who said, "Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not; one thing I know, that whereas I was blind now I see." And when he had been questioned repeatedly, and the friend who had restored his sight was reviled, he said in his defense, "If this man were not of God he could do nothing." And after a simple talk with

Jesus, he said, "Lord, I believe," and he worshiped Him.

Not so with the better class of Pharisees. They asked, "Is not this he that sat and begged? How were thine eyes opened? Where is he?" They asked him how he had received his sight. "This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the Sabbath. How can a sinner do such miracles? What sayest thou of him? Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? How then doth he now see? Give God the praise; we know that this man is a sinner. What did he to thee? How opened he thine eyes? Thou art his disciple, we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses, as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is."

The intelligent brain is too speculative for spontaneity; it takes time for investigation, and sometimes the paths of research lead into labyrinths from which the finite mind cannot find its way out alone, for though the mind may be active, it needs the esoteric guidance of the heart to give the passes and to fit the keys in to its hidden treasures. It is not wise to overlook weighty nuggets in impatient search for dross — as did the Pharisees. They could have found the greatest living Man, identified as the one who had restored sight to a person born blind, and because of this great power believed that he was sent of God. They certainly had no means by which to prove the position they took against Him.

Mr. Jameston was at least wise enough to give

the matter a hearing. He belonged to the class of men at that time who were satisfied with themselves and their environment. Any move toward their enlightenment seemed superfluous. They had their libraries of valuable books, and they liked to hear a fine discourse on any subject. Temperance lectures were needed in the slums, where men made brutes of themselves, and there really were so many miserable sinners that somebody ought to expostulate with them — and hence their liberality to such work.

They were wont to view Protestant preachers as so many young Elihus — so full of matter, the spirit so constraineth, that they were ready to burst like new bottles, and will speak to be refreshed, “Who do not accept any man’s person, neither give flattering titles unto them”; and alas! who said that, “Great men were not always wise, neither do the aged understand judgment.”

So it was really no small concession on Mr. Jameston’s part to accompany his son to the meeting-house.

When their handsome carriage drove up, with its pretentious coachman and footman, open-eyed curiosity was visible on the faces of many congregated about the church door, for though they had a rising young pastor, the congregation was composed chiefly of the plainer people. Many of the higher class were, however, beginning to find out the pastor’s worth, and as Mr. Jameston went in he noticed several old acquaintances seated about the church, and

he made the mental observation that if Worthington could stand it he guessed he could.

Mr. Meeds had not preached there before, but Jonathan Egbert, knowing his powers, had advertised his appointment, both from his pulpit and the weekly paper, and endorsed him on the street and everywhere he went, so that unusual interest was worked up; and many, like Mr. Jameston, had gone out that morning for the first time. He noticed with growing interest that in the already well-filled church places had to be found for several of his especial friends.

When Mr. Egbert and Mr. Meeds walked up the aisle the sympathy of the congregation was enlisted by the small stature and apparent youth of the new preacher. When seated in the high-boxed pulpit he was lost sight of by the audience.

After Mr. Egbert had opened the services by a fervent prayer, and the congregation had sung a hymn full of spiritual melody, Mr. Meeds took his place. He was just tall enough to lean with folded arms on the sacred desk, his boyish-looking arms, and hands as small and delicate as a girl's, but the oval face, with dark expressive eyes and brow of such intellectual proportions, stamped him as a learned man; and when he said, "Hear the word of the Lord," there was some psychical influence in tone and manner that baffles description. It proclaimed him the messenger of the Lord. The text was, "Then

saith the Lord unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few. Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth laborers into his harvest."

It is needless to say that the attention of the congregation was riveted. In the early years of Mr. Meeds' ministry the fire of genius illumined his progress, so it did not take a prophet to foretell his success; and the grand depths of his exposition of the Divine Law entranced his hearers.

Throughout his entire ministry, he had a winning grace peculiarly his own that those who heard him never forgot, and his kind heart reaching out in brotherly love to all founded "The Church of the Strangers" in the great American metropolis.

Now, leaning on the desk in his easy graceful way, expressive of the reverence and obedience of Samuel's "Here I am, Lord," he prayed, not merely the petition of a literary man addressed to the audience, in the hearing of the Almighty, but a prayer imbued with such irresistible earnestness that the congregation felt, and God heard.

At its close the eyes of Mr. Jameston met those of his son. "Talented young man," he said briefly, "I'll go to the carriage with Worthington; see if your friend will go home with us."

As the two old friends waited at the carriage, William shook hands with Mr. Meeds. "I am commissioned by my father to take you home with me. You can come?" he said inquiringly.

"I am sorry, William, but I promised Doctor Bragdon to go with Brother Egbert there to dine. Was that grand old gentleman with you your father?"

"Yes," said William. "I am anxious for you to meet him. He is waiting for us at the carriage."

"Ah!" said Mr. Meeds gladly, "I will go and give my excuses in person."

"Charles, this is my father and Mr. Worthington," said William. Lifting his hat from his head, and holding it deferentially, the young man shook hands with both gentlemen in the order introduced, and in his pleasant, graceful way made his excuses.

It was, however, arranged that he should return with them from the night service. The text selected for that sermon was, "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee *that* he may dwell in thy courts. We shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, *even* of thy holy temple."

The subject was handled in so masterly a manner that the gentle tones of the young divine were as potent in demolishing the walls of prejudice against the sacred calling as the trumpet blast of Joshua at the wall of Jericho.

In the mind of Lee Jameston a new dignity seemed to clothe even Parson Brown, and never again was he heard to say aught against William's chosen work.

This was the beginning of a great friendship between Mr. Jameston and his son's friend, and, as his

knowledge of Methodism increased and his acquaintance with its ministers extended, his home with its magnificent hospitality was opened to them, as was his heart and purse.

CHAPTER XXVII

MR. JAMESTON IS FAVORABLY IMPRESSED WITH THE PREACHERS

"MR. MEEDS," said his host, "I think that you and William put your heads together over those two sermons I heard you preach, for my especial conversion."

"No, sir," replied Meeds, smiling, "I had no idea that you would be there; but I thought that if the brainy men of Petersburg had such a poor opinion of the calling and the laborers, that something must be the matter with the laborers; hence the prayer for more — of another kind," he added so humorously that all laughed.

"I don't know about another kind," said the older man. "They are badly misrepresented. I think the difficulty lies in not having a fair hearing. That fellow Egbert is a brick. By George! he rattles off his prayers as if he thought the Lord wouldn't wait. I tell you they are worth rattling, too."

"William, did you ever hear what Colonel Chasseur said about Egbert's praying? He likened it to pouring peas on a dry hide."

"Not a bad illustration," laughed William.

"Mr. Jameston, do you know Jonathan well?"

"No, but I intend to cultivate his acquaintance."

"You will find him a most agreeable companion, he has such a keen sense of humor. I have seen him enjoy a joke so well that he would laugh himself into a state of exhaustion, but this characteristic that is a source of amusement to his friends is sometimes very awkward for him. He was called into the country to preach a funeral, where he found quite a crowd collected. Upon his arrival the crowd followed him in to where the body lay. The coffin was in the middle of a large room, and all the chairs arranged around were soon taken. Then a rural gentleman, who seemed to be a master of ceremonies, would bring in chairs as other friends arrived, then seat himself in one and lean back against the door. Several times he had gone through the same performance and reseatd himself, with the air of a man who had excelled in his department. There had been a flourish of trumpets in everything he had done, and the eagerness with which he would rise to welcome the incoming guest could not be surpassed, unless it was by the aplomb with which he would reseat himself. Egbert had just taken his stand at the head of the coffin, with open book, when again the officious usher bounced up and beckoned to a couple of young men, who declined to come nearer than the window opening on the porch. But the reckless abandon of grace with which he resumed his chair, throwing it back against the door was accomplished once too often. The

polished oaken floor was poor resistance for the oblique angle of the hind legs of the chair, and the usher slid with considerable force under the coffin, the chair making a peculiar horn-like noise as it passed over the bare floor. The feet of the astonished man came in contact with the coffin, and seriously jeopardized the hitherto solemn and undisputed right of place accorded the dead man. Jonathan said that after order had been restored he found the ludicrous incident looming up before him in such grotesque persistency that it was impossible to control himself. Even when in the most pathetic parts of the service he had to bury his face in his handkerchief and give vent to paroxysms of laughter, at which the grieved members of the household would follow suit in great lamentations. His efforts to repress such unbecoming levity fairly brought the tears to his eyes and gave him the appearance of being chief mourner. His keen sense of humor and its irrelevancy was no enviable experience."

During Mr. Meeds' stay with William Mr. Egbert made a bright and pleasant addition to their company a number of times, and it is not amiss to state here that this young preacher matured into a great divine, one of the most brilliant and the greatest beloved of the "Old Dominion."

At the close of the week Mr. Meeds continued his travels on the circuit, it having been arranged that he should stop with William on his way back. William was to return with him to North Carolina, for

he was anxious to make known to Jannette the change in his father; not only their complete reconciliation, but that his father had indorsed a marriage settlement that would have satisfied the most exacting guardian of even so desirable a bride, and had selected a diamond brooch and ring from among the Jameston jewels as a present from himself.

The old gentleman insisted that William should be married and bring his bride home, and fully recuperate his health, before resuming his ministerial duties.

The morning that the stage swung its unwieldy bulk from the Jameston gate upon William's departure for North Carolina, he and Mr. Meeds were in too happy a frame of mind to consider their mode of transportation.

Aunt Liza, watching the coach on its way off, said to Eben as he closed the gate: "Well, hit do beat all! and if them's Methody parsons, all I got ter say is, Whut ail 'em? An' Mars Lee, didn't he turn round quick ernuff ter make yer head swim?"

Eben chuckled.

"Mr. Meeds is lively as er cricket, an' he'd turn enybody. I declare they had such a good time, such talking and laughing, 'twas as much as I could do ter keep my mouth straight when I was waiting on the table; and, Jim! he had continral business in the chany closet."

"Methody parsons bein't as poky as yer 'lowed," said Liza, a little dryly. "I knowed all the time

Mars William knowed whut he was 'bout, and would come outen the big end uv the horn. And hit 'twan't Miss Susan, arter all de dinner partyin' and sich."

"Peers that it 'twan't," said Uncle Eben. "Well, even a fine young gentleman like Mars William can't marry but one."

"No," said Liza reflectively, "t'others will hav' ter look som'whars else now, and then not find his ekeel."

"Youse er 'spoundin' Gospil truth now, Liza."

CHAPTER XXVIII

“WAS THERE EVER ANOTHER SUCH MAN?”

AN early morning shower had sprinkled the thirsty land in the well-shaded grove of Vernal-Dune. The walks in many places were barely dimpled by its pattering, but the petals of the great fluffy roses lay in damp, crushed clusters about the bushes, adding their sweet perfume to that peculiar refreshing, earthy odor that pervades the atmosphere after a summer shower.

Colonel Chasseur and General Daniel were having a game of chess out in the front porch, while the carriage waited at the gate to take the children in to school, and was being liberally filled with peaches, apples, and watermelons. Mary Shotwell and Ann Owen Camdon passed through the porch. Louise stopped at her father's chair and bending down, whispered something in his ear. He ran his hand in his pocket, drew forth a large, well-filled silken purse, the compartments closed by gold rings, and handed it to the child. She, stooping to make a support of her knee, took from it such pieces as she liked. Dropping them into her schoolbag, she slipped back the rings snugly, and handing the purse back to her father, kissed him lightly on the cheek and ran down the walk to the carriage.

The Colonel, who had not taken his eyes from contemplating the chessboard, continued to wait patiently for his friend to move; but, instead, he threw back his head in a hearty laugh.

"I'll swear if that don't beat all!"

The Colonel looked at him inquiringly.

"Give your purse to a girl to help herself!"

Colonel Chasseur smiled, saying, "I knew she wouldn't take any more than she wanted."

"By Jiminy! who ever heard of such a thing? Was there ever another such man?"

"By the way, Colonel, last night after midnight, when everything about the house had got quiet, the stillness was broken by a most earnest lamentation or expostulation. I went to the window, and there, kneeling on the front porch, was an aged negro, his head uncovered and his hands clasped before him. He made quite a creditable supplication. I remember especially how earnestly he quavered out, 'Let there be a lasting continerance of blessings and prosperity for Mars Theo and his family.'"

"Yes," replied the Colonel, smiling, "that was Uncle Tom. He is a good old fellow. He is afraid where so much feasting is going on there may be some sin mixed with it, so, Job-like, he comes up periodically to sanctify the atmosphere."

Here they were interrupted by Theo Douglas, his usually bright face clouded, while in an aggrieved tone he said, "Grandpa, make Uncle Tom let me have a little watermelon."

His Grandpa patted him affectionately on the back, "That looks very selfish in Uncle Tom, when he has got so many."

"He is willing for me to have a big long one, but I don't want that kind."

"Ah! I see, Uncle Tom knows that his water-melons are not ripe when they are little."

"But, Grandpa, I don't care if it isn't ripe; I'm not going to cut it to eat."

"By Jiminy, Theo! are you going to swallow it whole?" asked the General in mock surprise. "I'd like to see that performance."

A half smile lighted the boy's handsome face. "Can't you do nothing with a watermelon but eat it?" he asked.

"No, by Granny! I can't."

"Well, I'm going to do something else with one," replied the boy, with so superior an air that the old General laughed merrily.

"Say, Grandpa, make Uncle Tom lem-me have one."

"All right, my boy. General, light your pipe. I will be back in a few minutes. As children can't hunt, they must do something to work off their superfluous vitality." Off he went, Theo hopping and skipping by his side. If he let his Grandpa in the secret of what the melon was wanted for, he was not betrayed.

That night at dark Theo, Tom, and Dick stole their way down to the spring, and after depositing a curi-

ous-looking and unhandy armful, Theo bade Tom and Dick to hide at a safe distance to see how the thing worked. No matches being in use, it was with some difficulty that a lighted candle had been smuggled from the house. Adjusting this, Theo sought ambush with the others and, peeping out at the trick, was jubilant! There it was! a great round head peering up from behind the rocks, emitting an unearthly luminosity from eyes, nose, and mouth, where a most formidable row of teeth were ready to snap up the very first one who came for water. The thing soon proved a "howling success." Someone was coming! They heard Susan say:

"Hurry up, Margrit, 'kaze I'm feard o' snakes."

As they turned into the path facing the spring there was an unearthly shriek, and both girls fled in terror to Aunt Ailsey's cabin.

Uncle Tom had a lot of fishing-tackle he was fixing by the bright blaze of a torch stuck in the ground.

"What in the name uv the Lord is ail you gals, screachin' dat way? They can hear you clar ter the great hus. Don't yer hear me tell you ter shut up!"

"Daddy," said Susan, catching her breath, "you'd er screach, too, if you'd seed that critter at der spring. Hit naterly breeved fire."

"Go long wid yer big tale; you just don't wanter fetch dat water. You'd better go arter rit whilst yer got Margrit wid yer."

"Fore God, Uncle Tom, I ain't er gwine dar agin!"

"You gals ain't doing nothing, less yer showing yer teeth," said Aunt Ailsey in disgust. "I'll see dat you fetch de water." Sticking a chunk of lightwood to Uncle Tom's torch, she marched in front down the path, saying bravely, "Come on, Susan. Whar's de pail?"

"Mammy, I drapped hit, and you'd er drapped it too. You won't git no funder than de turning, if hit's dar now."

"If hit's dar," mimicked Aunt Ailsey contemptuously. "You know 'tain't dar! I'm gre't mind ter frow dis chunk at yer, fer being sich er fool, hollowin' and scamperin' like two lightning-struck colts."

"God o' Mighty knows we ain't er-lying," declared Margaret earnestly.

The unusual disturbance had added to their number.

In the meantime Susan's sudden scream had so startled the mischievous scamps that they bumped their heads together, and Dick was precipitated quite a way down the hill in line with the advancing mob. The illuminated melon had a more infernal look in the distance than when near, and Dick very sincerely said, "Hit looks like de werry debil."

But above the various comments of the party Aunt Ailsey was heard to say, "Debil or no debil, I'll put out his chunk," and hurling her torch at it, there was a soft kind of splutter, and all became dark.

About day next morning Uncle Tom, passing the spring, saw the shattered melon and piece of candle and, chuckling good-humoredly to himself, said: "Dat's how come he wanted er round un."

Some time after this Colonel Chasseur was in Raleigh, General Daniel had accepted a seat in the gig to return home with him. It was court week, and there was much small-ware traffic going on, to which the gentlemen paid no attention until they came to an old cake woman, Mrs. Mabry, and to the amusement of the General, Colonel Chasseur stopped with a kind word. "Well, Mrs. Mabry, how has trade been to-day?"

"Hardly as good as common, sir. There's been more stands than usual."

"That is all right. I'll get a better supply then. It is an ill wind that blows no good, Mrs. Mabry."

"So they say, Colonel; but this I know, no ill wind blows before you."

"Ah, Mrs. Mabry, that is at least a clever saying."

"It is a true one, as I can prove by the General."

The Colonel had spread a large bandanna handkerchief down in the bottom of the gig, and the old lady emptied her basket of its contents. There were round cakes, square cakes, and horse-cakes, which stuck out in rebellious stiffness as the four corners of the bandanna were pulled up and tied. Paying the old woman they drove on again, the General saying,

with his characteristic humor, "By Granny, Colonel! Miss Barbara ain't sick, is she?"

At which the Colonel laughed heartily. "Oh, no! Miss Barbara would be highly insulted if these cakes got any nearer than the front gate. It pleases the children to distribute them to the little darkies, and it gratifies the old lady to get rid of her stock."

"Yes, by Granny! I bet she keeps two baskets — one for the public, and the other for Colonel Chasseur."

"Well," said the Colonel, laughing, "that is enterprise, and should be encouraged."

When next the cakes were seen, little Andrew McKinnon, Sarah's household treasure, sat on the lower step of the horse-block. With an angelic expression he was from the depth of his little blouse handing out cake after cake to the slick, laughing little darkies gathered around him, while Willie Douglas stood on the step above him, calling out with amusing mimicry, "Here's your dood ginger bed; twenty-fi-cent apiece, or free for a twarter!"

The next morning when the family was gathered at the breakfast table, and Miss Barbara was superintending affairs at a side table, a negro girl came from the kitchen to say the cook wanted more buckwheat. "Mammy's frying de las' buckwheat cakes."

It happened that as she elevated her voice to be heard by Miss Barbara through the merriment at the table, the laughing ceased, and the message was heard by the party. General Daniel further increased the

amusement by exclaiming, with ludicrous consternation: "Last buckwheat cakes! I'd rather hear the sound of Gabriel's trumpet!"

As the breakfast party was leaving the room Miss Barbara said to Colonel Chasseur, "I see, Colonel, you have snagged your sleeve. Leave your coat off and I will darn it."

The Colonel looked at his arm, then said with a merry twinkle in his eye, "I am very much obliged to you, Miss Barbara, but you would really do me serious harm if you carried out your kind intention."

"Me, Colonel Chasseur! How do you harm?"

"Why, don't you see it would be my financial ruin to appear in public wearing a badge of such premeditated economy."

The very good, but intensely practical housekeeper looked at him seriously, then said: "What's that got to do with darning your coat?"

There was a general laugh by the group of young people.

"Why, you will have folks calling me that darned old bankrupt."

"Good gracious, Colonel, I never heard of such a thing!"

"Neither must anyone else. Darns are much too premeditated for me to wear one."

"Well," said Miss Barbara, finally understanding that the Colonel would not wear a darn, "I wouldn't be as proud as all that."

"Ah, Miss Barbara," replied the Colonel quizzic-

ally, "thou that preachest a man shall not steal, Dost thou steal?"

"Gracious knows I never stole nothing," said the good lady, somewhat indignantly.

"Neither am I proud," he answered, laughing heartily as he walked off.

CHAPTER XXIX

SCHOOLGIRLS — SOME OF THEIR REMINISCENCES

It was the day after the closing exercises of the Female Academy, and several girls have met there, some to get forgotten articles, others as company. The Chasseur carriage stopped for Mary Shotwell. "What are you all doing in that desolate old place?"

"Reviewing the old battle-ground. It isn't half as formidable with General Benedict off the field."

"Look out," said Matilda Rasier, who had just come from the schoolhouse. "Here comes Susan with her beau. Coming for some more old books, I reckon."

Some of the girls smiled, but Louise leaned from the carriage window as they passed, and said: "Turner, I am going to have a few friends out home to-night; you must be sure to come, and tell Charles we will look for him, too."

"Thank you," he said, lifting his hat. "I will do so with pleasure."

Turner Rivers had grown into a tall handsome boy. He had long since left the wheelbarrow for school and Judge Launders' law office, and Charlie's friendship had been of much pleasure and benefit to the orphan boy. He and Susan Grafton seemed

greatly attracted to each other. As they passed on down the street, Mary said, "Brother Henry says that Turner is going to Mississippi. He has an uncle living out there."

"He is not going now," Ann Owen replied. "Charlie said he told him his uncle had a large family to take care of; but for the sake of the kinship, when he got his license to practice law, and could see his way clear, he would settle there."

"Yes," said Matilda, "he wants to get away from that wheelbarrow business."

"The wheelbarrow seems to give you more trouble than anybody else, Tildy," said Louise. "If your idea of rising in the world is to lose sight of where you sprung from, you had better take a running start now if you expect to get out of sight of your father's surveying chain. It's a heap longer than Turner's wheelbarrow."

"Hit him ag'in, bluejacket," said one, using a slang phrase, which created a merry laugh.

"Every time I say anything about Turner Rivers," said Tildy, with much asperity, "you all have something to say about pa. I'll have you to know he's as good as anybody, and just as dependent."

"Independent, Tildy," whispered her friend, pulling her sleeve.

"Anyway, it has got a 'dent' at the end of it," said Tildy, but the laugh that followed was too much for her, and she left the friends of Turner and Susan.

"It is bad enough to be a fool," Mary remarked,

"but to be a common fool is insufferable. Tildy ought to be taxed as a nuisance."

"Kate, you and Ann Owen get in; we might as well be together."

When seated in the carriage, Mary said, "I think we have more fun than any girls in the world, and, Louise, we owe lots of it to you."

"I never will forget the dancing school. Last session, every Friday Miss Benedict had to let our class out early, and, Louise, you went to Robedore's shoe store just as regular as Friday came and got a pair of black satin slippers. It got so monotonous that Robedore would say as soon as you entered the door, 'All right, Miss Louise, the box is at the end of the counter,' and you would skip down there and come forth shod like a fairy, and could beat everybody dancing, even old Goniky himself. Louise, what became of all the old slippers?"

Louise laughed merrily.

"I don't know. I never thought to inquire. But don't you think the pretty little things did well to last a week?"

"You are so light and your feet so tiny, they would not do for me."

"Girls, don't you remember the time we were coming from Judge Roewell's, and Louise said, 'My money is in the washstand drawer at Brother William's, but if I find a quarter in a horse's shoe track I will stand treat,' and, sure enough, just as we reached the branch, there right in the edge of the

water where the horse stopped to drink lay a bright quarter."

"Yes," said Mary, "and I remember saying that Providence let Louise find it, because it knew she would spend it."

"Speaking of money reminds me," said Louise, "of the time I went back after the forgotten money, and you girls kept walking slowly on, and finally reaching Pozzini's, went in and engaged the things and had them wrapped up. In the meantime I met Miss Benedict, and she turned me back, saying it was schooltime, and I came near being marked for laughing at you girls, when you came in late, red, hot, and empty-handed."

"Yes, I whispered to you, Pozzini says he will keep the things."

"And Kate added, storage free of charge, and Miss Benedict beat a silence tattoo on the old desk."

"All that seems years ago. I wonder if we are going to have as much fun when we grow up."

"I feel as old as the hills, now," said Ann Owen. "Uncle Tom, stop at home; I must get out."

The carriage drew up to the gate at Judge Camdon's. It was a fine residence, setting back in the midst of a beautiful well-shaded and decorated lawn, where marble statuary gleamed through the green. The long veranda, with its row of white columns, looked cool and inviting, and was typical of a Southern manor.

"Good-by! Don't fail to come to-night."

These little incidents in the life of the school children are really very simple, but the facts of their being true substantiates our previous assertion — that the aristocrats recognized worth wherever they found it, and those who were ambitious to rise were encouraged. There was quite a difference in the social standing of Susan Grafton and Turner Rivers. She was of a most excellent and well-known family; he was a poor boy, and unknown except as having claim to a respectable birthright.

At this period a man was called thoroughbred when he could trace his pedigree far back, descending from a class of men well-born, well-bred, well-kept, and well-educated. Money was an important factor in solidifying its basis, but not the only thing necessary to further the thing desired, or else Tildy and her money would have been looked upon more favorably. Turner had no money, but his qualities of gentleman were so apparent that they were accepted as inherent, and he had but little difficulty in gaining the recognition that is accorded invariably to talent.

It is not a part of the scheme of this work to follow further the career of Turner Rivers. We are not writing biography, but simply a picture of the South in “ye goode olde tyme.” However, in the passing of this estimable young man from the scenes here depicted, it will not be amiss to state that the interest of Susan in Turner developed into a pure love, which terminated in a happy marriage. Turner made a grand success of his chosen profession, and

his qualities of probity and honor gained him such esteem that he was eventually elevated to the bench.

There were fewer self-made men at this time, because there was less demand for them. The aristocracy considered they had within themselves a better made article, a more perfect species, having evolved from better stock, with all of the advantages that wealth and culture can transmit from generation to generation.

CHAPTER XXX

CHARCOAL OUTLINES OF FACTS

IN the Chasseur menage there was now to be another wedding, and Miss Barbara was looking after things with much interest, for Lisbon — she it was who was to be a bride — was a great favorite. Susan had carried the news to her mammy some time ago. “Lisbon’s cotch a beau — Mars Kinnon’s man Mark. I thought she wan’t so anxious ter stay up dar for nothing.”

“Lisbon has allers been a mannerly gal,” said Aunt Ailsey. “De white folks think ther ain’t nobody like Lisbon. If you wants to be a house-gal you’ll have to be mannerly. White folks don’t want no big-mouth, meddling nigger round dem nohow. Mark is mannerly, or Mars Kinnon would never er took him ’bout wid him, and he gwine courting too. Hit’s just like Miss Patsy to give Libson a big wedding.”

“Mammy, whar’ll de table be sot?”

“In de big double laundry, and Miss Barbara is er-fixen an’ er-fixin more good things ter eat than you never did see.”

When the night of the wedding came, an uninvited visitor arriving at Vernal-Dune would have wondered if he had been overlooked in the matter of an invita-

tion to some great festival, and festival it was. The "great house" as usual was dispensing cheerful rays of light from every window, the laundry was decorated and illuminated, and the long table was not only full of "good things, but sure an' had Misses' silver candlesticks and flower pots on hit, and the cakes was natur'ly piled up one on top of 'tur, clear outen sight, an' des sugared all over slick, wid fine lace paper on de edge of 'em."

Every cabin shone with the red glare of a liberal "pine knot"; a large clear space of turf, which was flooded with light from a full moon, was sufficient to accommodate any number of dancers.

It has been said that a negro is happiest when eating a watermelon, but that is passive enjoyment. The height of his joy is reached in the dance. The negro's love of music and the dance is inherent. Its enlivening touch quickens some African current that transports them in spirit to scenes of revelry they have never even heard of. Like their dark blood, it is transmitted from generation to generation, but civilization has partially divested it of the ghoulisn intensity of dervishes and enlivened it with a ludicrous mimicry of graceful abandon. Their entire anatomy is electrized in rhythmic gesticulation. It sways, wavers, and demi-semi-quavers, step after step, gliding, galloping, bending, curtesying, double-shuffling, trip-pirouetting, according to the agility and hilarity of the dancer, intermixed with incessant slang and laughter, every tone and movement ecstatic.

Above all is the inspirited director, chanting the figures, and thus the merry-go-round continues — no care, no sorrow, no weariness of mind or body, happy, healthy slaves.

The young ladies gave Lisbon's dress the finishing touches, and, with bridal roses decorating her head and, in a very pretty white dress, Lisbon felt that she properly sustained the honor of her Master's house. She had said she wanted to be married at the "Gret House" like quality folks, and so all the family and their company could be at it. "You know, Miss Sarah, common niggers are so unmannered when they are off to themselves."

And here I want to pay a tribute to the memory of "Aunt Lisbon." She lived to be free for many years, but the Emancipation Proclamation never changed her or her condition. New friends or new acquaintances could never influence her to leave her master's family. "I've got my opinion of niggers, and I had rather be dead than to leave my white folks and live off with them," she declared. Her white people and their friends were her friends all through her life. The changes incident to time and revolution left unshaken her affection and fidelity, and much of my knowledge of negro life at Vernal-Dune is due to the stories of old times remembered with such pleasure and so graphically told by Aunt Lisbon, while she coddled the youngest child in her kind old arms and kept "T'other childun quiet." Hers were not ghost stories or fairy tales, but the outpouring of happy and

comical memories of the "great house" and the cabin.

The laws of the State did not require a marriage license or the church a service, and this was not unwise. The civilization of the slaves was gradual, and the fewer laws they had to contend with the better it was for them. They selected their own companions, and the marriage bond was based upon the consent and recognition of the master; that was their license and record. Respect for the master and self-respect induced general harmony. There were fewer disturbances and less scandal than the law has been able to prevent since it has made the negroes amenable to it.

When Mr. Jameston and Jannette returned to Vernal-Dune, bringing Jim and Nellie, the bright yellow girl had said to Jim:

"I am free to confess I never see so many black folks."

"We's respectable folks," Mam Judy had replied. "All Mars Theo's folks is quality; no half-breed nor yaller niggers here, 'cept they as comes visiting. There hain't been since my reckermembrance, nor I never heard tell of no mammy on Mars Theo's plantation what didn't have her proper husband, according to Mars Theo's notification. We is spectable black, and don't aim to be scandalous yaller ones."

"You don't have ter be scandalous to be yaller," said Nellie, defending her color, and smiling coquet-

tishly at Ransom, who was as tall and straight as an Indian, and about the same color.

"Aunt Judy don't mean sich a lady as you," said Ransom apologetically; "but most ginerally the yaller gals is mighty bigerty and do look down on black folks."

"Well, I don't," said good-natured Nellie. "And Aunt Liza is your color, and she is quality. Hit ain't the color that makes quality, hit's yer white folks."

And while I am recording history I will note that Nellie married Ransom. Many years after, when she was the mother of a very comely family, she turned white. Her health seemed good, but nevertheless her epidermis underwent a transformation; in spots the yellow became a pinkish white, and finally her skin became as that of a fair white person.

I will close this chapter with one of Dick's practical jokes recalled to my mind by Nellie's strange metamorphosis.

General Daniel had just come in from hunting and stopped in the yard to discharge the load of buckshot from his gun. There was no one in sight, so lifting the heavily loaded gun to his shoulder he fired away. In the garden near by Dick had stooped down to examine more closely the track of some "varmint," and just as the gun went off Dick cleared the fence at a bound and as suddenly fell to the ground to all appearances dead.

“My God! Chasseur! I have killed Dick!” gasped the General, and the old bronzed soldier turned as pale as possible. But before anyone could reach Dick he jumped up with a loud “Yah! yah!!” and slapping his thighs to further imitate the galloping of a horse, he was soon out of sight. The General, who had never felt fear in battle and had come out unscarred, was now marked for life by the mischief of a negro boy. The sudden shock had whitened his hair in a moment, which “Father Time” had not been able to do with all his years of experience.

CHAPTER XXXI

A BRIEF RECORD

To give in detail the daily life of so large a family as that of Colonel Chasseur would make too great a volume. So we will but briefly chronicle some events, especially when they are similar to others already described. We have given samples of celebrations and entertainments without duplicating any one. So in the matter of later marriages we will say that they were celebrated in manner most agreeable to the parties concerned.

Ada and the successful young doctor were married. Her exceedingly gay spirits and brilliant career as a belle did not prevent her gracing the home circle with so gentle a radiance that "her children rise up and call her blessed, her husband also, and he praiseth her." The broad field for sympathy and charity always opened before a doctor's wife was patiently and kindly cultivated, yielding her an abundant harvest of grateful protégés.

William married the handsome Ann Kerba. He became a prominent physician, and the proud father of two daughters. Mary was a thorough little aristocrat, possessing the combined traits of a noble father

and an elegant, high-toned mother. Even as a child her manner was such as to attract unusual attention. Martha was of a different style, bright, pretty, and petite. She relied upon the indulgences of others for her happiness, and her gentle, winning ways won the admiration that Mary's patrician airs demanded.

The gentle Jannette has recently cast her lot with the talented young divine, and he has had the happiness of taking her to his dear ancestral home, and been much gratified by the admiration and affection that his grand old father has for his daughter-in-law.

Aunt Liza said to Eben in confidence: "No wonder Mars William rather have that sweet, little blue-eyed lady than Miss Susan snapping her black eyes continental. I knowed all de time Mars William knowed what he was 'bout."

The children, Louise and Eugenia, are nearing womanhood, but they have not let the pleasures of a luxurious life cancel its duties. They are not only generous to their friends and liberal to the poor, but their education and associations have, even in their young maidenhood, crowned them with such graces of heart and experience that demands upon their sympathy and assistance in the sick-room have become importunate, and their friends and even the doctors have found it necessary to expostulate with them.

Louise was bright and thoughtful, and had many

little winning ways, especially in her associations with old people and children. She always thought of the right thing to do for their comfort or pleasure, and her dear little hands were always ready to serve them. She never waited for any one else to perform the little acts of politeness or kindness when occasion presented. There are some people who hold their resources in reserve. They will act graciously when requested, but will ignore the slightest service when possible. Not so with Louise. She was always helpful at the right time and place, as it opened before her. The gentle beauty of her young life, cheering all in her pathway, and the purity and goodness of heart increasingly showed its rich depths as its sensitive petals unfolded through its humane warmth.

Ann Owen Camdon, her gifted friend, has painted an exquisite "watch paper." It is white rice paper, the edges daintily crenated. It is lined with delicate pink. A lovely wreath of heartease inclose the words "Forever thine." This she has placed in Louise's watch, to remain as a souvenir of her affection, until the momentous time and successful wooer comes, when it was to be transferred to his watch by way of graceful acceptance.

Dear, beautiful little souvenir! I take you in my hand tenderly, reverently. Time has stilled the hearts of those between whom you passed as talisman or prophet. "Forever thine" never were words imbued with more tender sentiment or perfect faithfulness. You represent to me all that is most sacred

in the marriage bond, all that is most tenderly beautiful in the married life, all that is most pure and faithful in the human heart. You pass beyond the finite — “Until death do us part” into the infinite “Forever thine.”

CHAPTER XXXII

THE CUP OF THE HOLY GRAIL

“What is it?
The Phantom of a cup that comes and goes?”
The cup, the cup itself, from which
Our Lord
Drunk at the last Sad Supper with
His Own,
. . . and if a man
Could touch or see it, he was healed
At once
By faith of all his ills.

—TENNYSON.

EUGENIA, the youngest and most delicate of the Chasseur children, had always been cherished by family and friends with every indulgence that love and devotion could prompt unlimited means, but this had not spoiled a cheerful, unselfish disposition, and as far as her health and family would permit she took an active part in “good works.”

There was a most pleasant friendship existing between her father’s family and that of Mr. Dyke Linton. His two daughters, Mary and Lizzie, who had been too young to take an active part in the Vernal-Dane gayeties, were growing up into pretty, intelligent and accomplished girls, and a firm friendship existed, which eventually drew later generations into the strength of “family ties.” They were also

young Christians and unwilling to fritter away all of their time in selfish pleasures. The young people of the two families often shared a solemn vigil by the bedside of the suffering. It was during one of these occasions that a most extraordinary event occurred, the mystery of which has never yet been solved. It is not related here simply to introduce the weirdness of the supernatural into a plain little story, but as part of my conscientious faithfulness in the portrayal of characters and the part they play.

Eugenia and Mary had agreed to spend the night at the home of the Methodist minister, Mr. Langdon, whose child was very ill. It was not expected to live. Knowing how perfectly trustworthy the young ladies were, the sadly afflicted and exhausted parents were persuaded to retire to an adjoining room to rest. The experienced eyes of the gentle young nurses saw that the little one's life was at a very low ebb. It was a dark, dreary night, rendered doubly so by the oppressive stillness of the street, the house, the sick chamber, the tiny cradle with its passive little sufferer; to sit in silence, one on each side of the dying babe and anxiously watch with faint hope for its revival, and in sorrow for the fatal change that must awaken the mother to deeper despair than she had found even in her sorrow-laden dreams; to renew the candle, to snuff it; to moist the pale lips; to touch the frail little wrists where the life current seemed to pause as passive as a fine silken thread; to bend down the anxious ear to meet any sound of life too faint

to rise. In the midst of these responsible ministrations they both turned suddenly, attracted by something within range of their vision. At the head of the cradle a "cup" descended. It was not presented by human hands; it did not fall; it came slowly and evenly down, and as it touched the floor it settled itself in a little circular movement. Oh, no! they had not slept. There was the cup! With white, awed faces and trembling fingers they took it up; within was a teaspoonful of dark red mixture. "The cup of the Holy Grail," said Eugenia reverently, "Let's awaken Mr. Langdon."

When they had made known to the parents of the child the singular circumstances under which the cup had appeared, it created much speculation; each servant was interviewed, every neighbor. No similar cup could be found anywhere. However, the contents were not given to the child, that died that night. I can give no explanation of so strange an occurrence, but simply give the incident without exaggeration. Perhaps it was not intended as a medicine to be given to the dying infant "The cup of the Holy Grail" appeared in sympathy to the frail young nurse, when as a ministering angel she was in touch with heavenly things, and through its supernatural power was meant as a registered promise, that she too should be healed by faith of all ills. She passed into the beautiful world where there is no sickness or sorrow long before lines of age had marked her sweet face or its silver threaded her rich brown hair.

EPILOGUE

As the purpose of this story is to fairly represent the home life of the Southern people at a period too remote to attract news gatherers, and to preserve as worthy of historical record much that is traditional and of pastoral simplicity, we confine ourselves to that era of peace and plenty ; and as it is not a biography or romance, we will close without a dramatic peroration.

However small the stage or awkwardly the manager has shifted the scenes, know ye who are interested in the cast of characters, that all were to the manner born, their impersonation realistic, the play historical.

